



# THE INDEPENDENT

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Tories admit their anti-Blair campaign was a total failure

**It didn't  
hurt.  
It didn't  
work**

ANTHONY BEVINS  
and JOHN RENTOU

The Tories yesterday conceded that they had not landed a punch on Tony Blair since he became Labour leader two years ago. With less than a year to an expected May 1997 election, John Major endorsed a strategy of assault.

In a reversal of previous campaign themes, special meeting of the Cabinet agreed for the first time that Labour had indeed changed its colours, but that it was now more dangerous and extreme than it ever had been under Harold Wilson and James Callaghan.

Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of

admission, that the whole of their political strategy has been wrong for two years.

"They are now saying that Labour is new and has changed. The claim that it is now more dangerous and more damaging cannot be sustained; they will not lay a finger on us."

But Labour unity was again broken from the Left when Diane Abbott, the MP and member of Labour's National Executive, threatened to vote against a Blair government if it went too far to the right.

The party's national executive will today get its first sight of the 10,000-word "Road to the Manifesto" document, the Blair programme for government

He said the message being put out by the Tories had been contradictory and confused, and after yesterday's Cabinet endorsement of the new line, Mr Major urged his colleagues to show discipline in "singing from the same hymn sheet".

Mr Dorrell said last night that the people of Britain should not take for granted the evolutionary political change of the last three centuries.

"You only need the most cursory acquaintance with the blood-stained pages of history to understand its significance. And yet it is precisely that record on continuous evolutionary change which is now under threat from Labour's half-baked ideas for the constitution."

Other threats that will be highlighted include a sell-out to Europe, higher taxes, and a resurgence of union power. Drawing a comparison with Wilson and Callaghan, the Party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, said on Friday: "In many important respects, Labour have a more dangerous policy agenda today than they did in the 1960s and 1970s."

A copy of a Tory election campaign budget, leaked recently to Labour, shows the party is planning to spend more than £2m on a "New Labour, New Danger" poster campaign, starting today and running to the end of September.

The campaign will then shift into another gear, moving from the negative to the positive, with a party political broadcast, and posters, arguing "Life's Better" under the Conservatives.

One Tory complaint is that Mr Blair has deliberately taken on the left in his own party to show how moderate he is.

The Labour left continued to feel that perception yesterday with more protest against Mr Blair's dictatorial leadership. Ms Abbott told the *Independent* last night she would not leave the Labour Party, but that Mr Blair was planning to rely on "votes from other quarters" rather than his own left-wing.

Donald Macintyre, page 13

that is expected to be overwhelmingly approved for a Thursday launch.

Labour's Deputy Leader, John Prescott, said last night:

"Without even knowing the contents of the 'Road to the Manifesto' document, they have decided to launch a new negative campaign."

The Tory spokesman said: "Over the last two years, we have come up with a number of lines of attack against the Labour Party as Tony Blair has shamelessly lurched to the right in the pursuit of Middle England."

Those lines of attack have included the accusation that he's been stealing our clothes. That is not terribly threatening because that's exactly what Tony Blair wanted us to say."

Donald Macintyre, page 13

**QUICKLY**  
Labour's £100m cut  
Labour offered a taste of how it plans to cut bureaucracy in the NHS, claiming that £100m it plans to release from "red tape" will allow an extra 100,000 patients to be treated. Page 6

**More Britons sue**  
Whether it's claiming damages for a burnt mouth from eating a pie, or a burglar suing his victim, more Britons are resorting to the law. Page 3

**Status Quo ante**  
Ageing rockers Status Quo were refused a hearing by a High Court Judge yesterday over their claims that Radio One ignores their music because they are too old. Page 4



COLIN BROWN

Ascot week and Wimbledon have been followed by a new event in the social calendar, marked not by the thunder of hooves, or the pop of rackets, but by the thump of ministerial heads on a handbag. Britain is in the middle of Baroness Thatcher's social season.

The former prime minister's private office explained yesterday that the summer calendar is the reason why the famous handbag has been seen swinging at a variety of targets in recent days.

Even some of her most ardent admirers, including the De-

fence Secretary, Michael Portillo, have been on the receiving end. She gave him a verbal handbagging at a reception at the Imperial War Museum for his failure yesterday to join the ex-servicemen in representing Britain at the ceremony in France to mark the 80th anniversary of the battle of the Somme.

Yesterday, Lady Thatcher was out of the country on a private visit. She is planning to go to Hong Kong for a few days when she may give China the benefit of her views on the introduction of democracy in the colony.

She launched her season with

a handbagging of John Major, who stopped Tory MP Bill Cash from taking funds from Sir James Goldsmith for his Eurosceptic activities. Lady Thatcher hit back by offering funds from the Thatcher Foundation. Mr Major was so angry, he called her a "mad cow".

But a diet of beef is not the problem. Her office yesterday had a simple explanation. "Summer is the time when invitations to drinks parties go out and she meets a lot of interesting people in conversation about a number of things. It is nothing more sinister than that."

"You cannot expect her to stand there and say nothing."



Henman rises to the occasion

Tim Henman (above) yesterday became the first British player for a generation to reach the Wimbledon men's singles quarter-finals with a 7-6, 6-4, 7-6 victory over Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden in the fourth round.

Each player had two service-breaks in the third set, which headed into a tie-break with Henman immediately forging into a 4-0 lead. The crowd got behind him, but an attack of

nerves allowed Gustafsson to reduce his deficit to 4-6 as Henman fluffed an easy backhand volley.

The British player made no mistake with his next serve, forcing Gustafsson so wide he could only return into the net for Henman to win the tie-break 7-4 and the match in just under two hours.

Full report, page 24

The crowd got behind him, but an attack of

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# MPs and the great British seaside holiday

From my vantage point in the press gallery I looked down upon a scene of devastation and civil strife. Scottish Labour MPs gurgled obscenities about referenda and consultation. Grey-haired Welshmen wept for the future of their Assembly. Here and there rebellious spirits huddled together to mutter about fascism in one party, echoing Ken Livingstone's comparison between Benito Mussolini and Antonio Blair.

Naturally, it took my very special insight to see all this. To the untrained eye all would have looked normal: two dozen or so Labour MPs gathered together to ask questions about National Heritage and, of course, to laugh at Virginia Bottomley. A harm-



DAVID AARONOVITCH

less enough pastime to be sure, but beneath the surface there was a roiling undertow, a confusion, a deep unease. Which party was next for the chop?

Man of the moment is Newport's hirsute member, Paul Flynn. Through the early afternoon Mr Flynn appeared in, and disappeared from, the

Chamber several times. Unfertilised in appearance to begin with, his hair and beard became gradually more disarranged as he rushed between House and studios; his tie loosening and his jacket riding up. Another couple of hours and he would have been down to his socks. Such sartorial carelessness made him a magnet to admiring would-be rebels on the Labour benches.

Tony Banks came and told him a rude story, Diane Abbott shared one of her strange girlish giggles with him, Jeremy Corbyn sat in front of him and had a little shoulder. Rebellion was in the air!

And it was hardly surprising. New Labour's policies are difficult to understand sometimes.

Take, for example, the important matter of the seaside. Roger Gale (Con, North Thanet) asked Virginia a Tory Heritage Question (a THQ consists of an avid free-market MP requesting vast sums of lottery money for his or her constituency) about the reconstruction of Margate.

Mrs Bottomley solemnly told the House that she was "a great believer in the British seaside holiday". This gave rise to titbits in the Labour ranks, as they mentally pictured the Secretary of State in McGill-like poses on Margate sands. "Of course", thundered Virginia, "such denigration of the seaside bodies for the seaside holiday industry, should the party opposite come to power!" And it's true.

Paul Flynn may be wedded to the windy delights of Barry Island, but one suspects that New Labour means good only to the villa rentiers of Tuscany and the Dordogne. Mrs McSorley's guesthouse (no dogs, children or sex) will be an early casualty of a change of government. More evidence of Blairist backsiding came from Jacqui Lait (Con, Hastings and Rye), who revealed that June's edition of *Lottery Monitor* had suggested that Labour might use lottery money for education and stuff like that.

Lawks a muss me, exclaimed Ginny horrified, this would be a "betrayal of the principle of additivity". Members opposite were thunderstruck -

not additivity! Betray socialism, sell-out over equality, turn your back on human rights - but for God's sake Tony, leave additivity intact!

Just how far this bickering has gone was exposed later on by that veteran Tam Dalyell. Mr Dalyell, who manages successfully to negotiate that fine line between portentousness and pomposity, made reference to the South African Foreign Minister "Dr Nzo". Could this, I wondered, be how New Labour now describes the estimable Dr Alfred Nzo? Was this the dread additivity by which we are all to have our names extended? If so it's tough on Dawn Triparnololo and Keith Vazazaz. And on me.

## SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

**A** jury yesterday retraced the steps the prosecution's unemployed gardener Howard Hughes took on the night he allegedly snatched and murdered teenager Sophie Tosio. The eight-man and three-woman jury heard high winds and heavy rain as they followed his footprints around Llandudno and Colwyn Bay in North Wales with the judge, prosecution and defence lawyers from Chester Crown Court. Hughes, 31, denies twice raping Sophie and murdering her in Llandudno early in the morning of 30 July last year. The prosecution says Mr Hughes snatched Sophie from a tent as she camped overnight with her sister and cousin in the back garden of her uncle's home, raped and strangled her and threw her body into the sea. The court group was also shown Mr Hughes's home in Colwyn Bay, where he lived with his mother before returning to Chester where the trial continues today.

**A** council enforcement officer, sacked for fiddling 95p on his expenses, received £10,000 in settlement of his claim for unfair dismissal. Costs of £500 were awarded against North Hertfordshire Council by an Industrial Tribunal in Bedford. Terence Smith, 60, had claimed 50 miles at 7p for posting planning notices to 14 villages and hamlets one day in June last year. But a solicitor in the council's legal department said he had covered the area in 46 miles - a difference of 98p. Mr Smith was sicked but took the case to court in May when the tribunal indicated it would find in his favour, after the legal officer admitted he did not know which route Mr Smith had used. The out-of-court settlement was made without further evidence being heard.

**I**reland observed a minute's silence yesterday in memory of the murdered crime reporter Veronica Guerin and Garda Jerry McCabe, shot dead by the IRA in Limerick last month. Buses came to a halt, and hospitals, factories, garda stations and newspaper offices joined in the silence at 1pm. On national radio the tribute, backed by trade union and business organisations, was opened by a recording of Ms Guerin's own words in an interview first broadcast on the eve of Garda McCabe's funeral on 10 June, itself attended by 25,000 people. "That's what has amazed me," Ms Guerin said, "that even though a Guard has been murdered and another seriously injured, that some members of the public are still willing to protect these guys." Her comment came after she highlighted the extensive network of safe houses and farms around Limerick enabling the IRA to operate freely in the area. *Alan Mardock*

**T**he Government avoided a possible defeat in the Commons last night by making concessions over the provision of television stations for deaf, blind and partially sighted people. The Secretary of State for National Heritage, Virginia Bottomley, announced targets that broadcasters, within the context of the Broadcasting Bill, must attain in providing subtitles, audio-description and sign language to accompany programmes. Original targets sought to require digital broadcasters to subtitle 95 per cent of programmes within ten years of getting their licences and have 10 per cent audio and 10 per cent with sign language. However, the minister argued that these quotas were "unpractical". Instead, she announced targets of 50 per cent for subtitled, 10 per cent for audio-description and 5 per cent for signing.

**T**he DTI adviser who recommended a grant of £850,000 of taxpayers' money to Rom-Data Corporation, a computer company, shortly before becoming its chairman, said yesterday his behaviour was no different from that of government ministers. Kenneth Holmes, who was adviser to the South West Industrial Development Board said: "At the time, ministers joined boards of companies they privatised and senior civil servants did the same - it is not unique to advisers to the DTI."

Rom-Data, which subsequently collapsed, is at the centre of a Serious Fraud Office inquiry and, as the *Independent* revealed yesterday, the Government has launched an urgent review of possible conflicts of interest between its quasi-approving bodies, the regional development boards and the companies receiving the cash. Mr Holmes declared his intention to join Rom-Data before his colleagues approved the grant. But David Jamieson, MP for Devonport, who has campaigned for an inquiry into Rom-Data and possible conflicts of interest, said members declaring an interest was not enough. "Millions of pounds of taxpayers' money has been handled by small groups of businessmen on these development boards who are totally unaccountable," he said. *Chris Blackhurst*



Long day: EC Commissioner Franz Fischler and Douglas Hogg (left) Photograph: Joel Chant

## Farmers put on a brave face for the Royal Show

JOJO MOYES

With its sea of ruddy faces, glossy livestock and booming brass bands, the atmosphere at the opening of The Royal Show at Stoneleigh, Warwick, yesterday could be described as bullish.

But beyond the bowler hats, rosettes and well-trotted cattle down at Britain's biggest agricultural event there were signs that this was an industry under siege. Visitors had to drive past protest banners bearing placards of factory farming images. Beef farmers, they read, "is your industry worth this?"

Overhead a bi-plane circled, the banner streaming

out behind it read: "CJD-BSE - don't risk lifting cattle ban - RFA" and every Land Rover bore imploring stickers: "Eat British beef with confidence."

Feelings are running high in Britain's farming communities. And the decision of Franz Fischler, the EC Agriculture Commissioner responsible for upholding the European ban on British beef products, to make himself the prize exhibit was widely regarded as a brave one.

Mr Fischler (a sturdy Ayrshire bull) told the show: "I know these are particularly difficult times ... all the more important to keep the dialogue going, to carry on with the negotiations," he said.

On a day of brave faces, it was left to one stall to highlight the strains on farmers - the Samaritans, who attend every year.

June Jenkinson, a farmer from Cumbria, was not impressed. "It's nothing that we haven't heard already, is it?" she said. But the Minister of Agriculture Douglas Hogg was doing what he could. In a day that encompassed visits to the stands of *Farmers Weekly*, The Country Landowners Association and The Hereford Breed Society, Mr Hogg (small British breed, well over the 30-month age limit) was keen to reassure farmers that the Government was doing everything possible to speed the end of the beef crisis.

On a day of brave faces, it was left to one stall to highlight the strains on farmers - the Samaritans, who attend every year.

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# Mouth burnt on a pie? Join the rush to sue

Whether it's claiming damages for a burnt mouth from eating an apple pie, or a burglar suing his victim, more Britons are resorting to the law to settle disputes.

Although we may be a long way behind the United States, where writs are fired off like "shot-shooters in the Wild West", the healing rush to the courts has the lawyers rubbing their hands with glee.

The decision by Cyril Smith, the 59 year old cancer patient from Portsmouth, who is suing his health authority because it - wrongly - diagnosed that he had three months to live came as no great surprise to many litigation experts. Some claim that the number of such medical negligence cases are increasing by 15 per cent a year.

Mark Cran QC, who has

numbered George Michael among his clients, says too many people resort to law whenever they suffer a mishap. "They have come to believe that whatever goes wrong in life is someone's fault and that there is no such thing as bad luck. Something is amiss."

The Law Society's Suzanne Burn pointed out that while overall litigation is not rising, the number of personal injury, professional negligence and medical

negligence suits is climbing. "There is a growing awareness among consumers of their rights."

Anecdotal evidence suggests that last year's new "no win no fee" rules where lawyers and clients can agree to waive payment unless a case is successful

for more actions.

Fraser Whitehead, a senior partner with law firm Russell, Jones and Walker which specialises in negligence cases, said the apparent growth in legal action was explained by a shift from "unfashionable" cases such as factory and mine accidents to the more headline-catching actions such as those involving stress.

For many, he said, there was

no alternative to law as insurance firms got more cost-conscious and the legal system tried to speed up court cases.

A growth area has been

against public authorities. Last year the Metropolitan police was ordered by courts to pay £267,000 in compensation to victims of ill-treatment. This year already the figure is nearly £1million.

John Mead, a claims manager

for Zurich Municipal, which specialises in insuring local authorities, said there was a marked increase in "bizarre" legal actions.

Many observers point to the rising legal aid bill which has funded many negligence actions. In 1991-2 the net legal aid cost in medical negligence cases in England was £5.9million; by 1993-4 it had leapt to £21.9million.

## Winning damages for fun in a bar

Litigation may be getting worse in Britain - but we still have a long way to catch up the land of the lawyer - the United States.

Just days ago it was announced that film maker Oliver Stone was being sued for £20m by a victim of "copycat" violence from his film *Natural Born Killers*.

A New Mexico woman won \$1.8m (reduced on appeal) when she was scalded taking off the lid of a cup of McDonald's coffee; A man won \$8m after throwing himself in front of a subway train which sliced off his legs - apparently suicides should be warned of the risk. Then there was the woman who successfully sued the owners of a bar which she fell out of, drunk, and hurt herself.

In a recent case a woman sued a New York newspaper after she tripped over the paper bundle on the doorstep. Her case? - the newspaper was "too fat".

Another litigant successfully sued after their bare feet were mangled. The machine had a sign saying "do not use with bare feet", but had not apparently made it clear that using it with bare feet could hurt you ...

And, maybe apocryphally, a woman took the manufacturers of her microwave oven to court after she had tried to dry her pet dog in it. She complained that the machine had not displayed a sign warning of the consequences - roast dog.

### The case of the Hillsborough police

Fourteen police officers were recently awarded £1.2 million damages between them for the anguish they suffered policing the Hillsborough tragedy of 1989, which left 96 fans dead.

The figure, reached in a out-of-court settlement with South Yorkshire police just one hour before a hearing, was to compensate for the post-traumatic stress suffered by the officers.

### The case of the scalding apple pie

Darren Miles, aged 28, won £750 compensation from McDonald's last September after the hot filling from an apple pie fell out and scalded his arm.

Mr Miles, from Andover, Hampshire, fears he may be permanently scarred as a result of the accident. His lawyer, Aftab Ahmed, said that the pie had not been fit for its purpose

- to be eaten immediately after sale. "Had a child been injured in this way it could have been a lot more serious." McDonald's settled out of court without accepting liability. In the US two years ago an 81-year-old woman won £1.8million, later reduced to £320,000, for burns suffered after opening a cup of McDonald's coffee.

### The case of the burglary victim

A burglary victim was told by a court to pay £4,000 damages to the burglar.

Allotment holder Ted Newbery, 82, shot intruder Mark Revill in his shed near Ilkeston, Derbyshire. Revill was later jailed for the burglary but sued Newbery for damages, claiming that the injuries had been traumatic and had "ruined his life".

### The case of the holiday passenger

In June last year two British women were awarded £3,000 damages and costs after they were pestered and sexually harassed by staff at a hotel in Tunisia.

What made the case unique was that the two women, Tracey and Rachel Heald, who were awarded the money by a county court for "psychological injury", had sued the tour operators, Thomson, in Britain. Both tourists were on their first trip abroad and said they suffered unwanted attention and an obscene gesture.

Lawyers for the women hailed the case as forcing tour operators to be more careful in their choice of accommodation; however, the operators are now wondering just how far their liability extends.

### The case of the stressed worker

Social worker John Walker was awarded £175,000 compensation last year when he successfully claimed that his employers had subjected him to too much stress, which led him to two nervous breakdowns and forced him into early retirement.

A settlement was reached with his employers, Northumbria

County Council, after a High Court judgement and before a Court of Appeal hearing. It was the first successful stress-related civil action.

A spokesman for his union, Unison, said it was a landmark case: "When we meet employers ... I believe we will now treat us more seriously."

### The case of the rugby referee

Rugby referee Michael Nolan set a precedent when a High Court judge ruled in April that he was liable for a damages claim from a young player who was paralysed when a scrum collapsed in a match he was controlling.

Mr Justice Curtis held that the referee had "failed to exercise reasonable care and skill" in preventing scrum collapses.

The court had heard that the game was niggly and over-violent and suffered an "abnormally high" number of such collapses.

Successful litigant Ben Smullen, now 21, was crippled for life by the incident.

## Gazza finds a match to celebrate



Comfort zone: Limos delivering guests to Gazza's wedding

Photograph: Tom Pistor

To the disappointment of around 80 fans who gathered at the hotel's gates, the nine-vehicle fleet of stretch limos which brought the England stars to the hotel had darkened windows.

A Tottenham fan, Sarah Bentley, 23, of Hertford, had taken the day off work to wave a Gazza banner. She said: "I've liked him ever since he played

for Tottenham. I just wish he would come out and say hello."

The couple each picked favourite romantic songs for the DJ, Chris Evans, to play on their big day. Sheryl's choice was the classic Righteous Brothers weepie "Unchained Melody", while Gazza picked Van Morrison's "Have I Told You Lately That I Loved You".

## Tempers boiling over at Blanc

M Blanc, who owns the famous eatery Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons in Great Milton, Oxfordshire, opened his new venture with massive publicity.

But for the less gastronomic residents of an Oxford street, constant odours from M Blanc's latest venture are getting right up their noses.

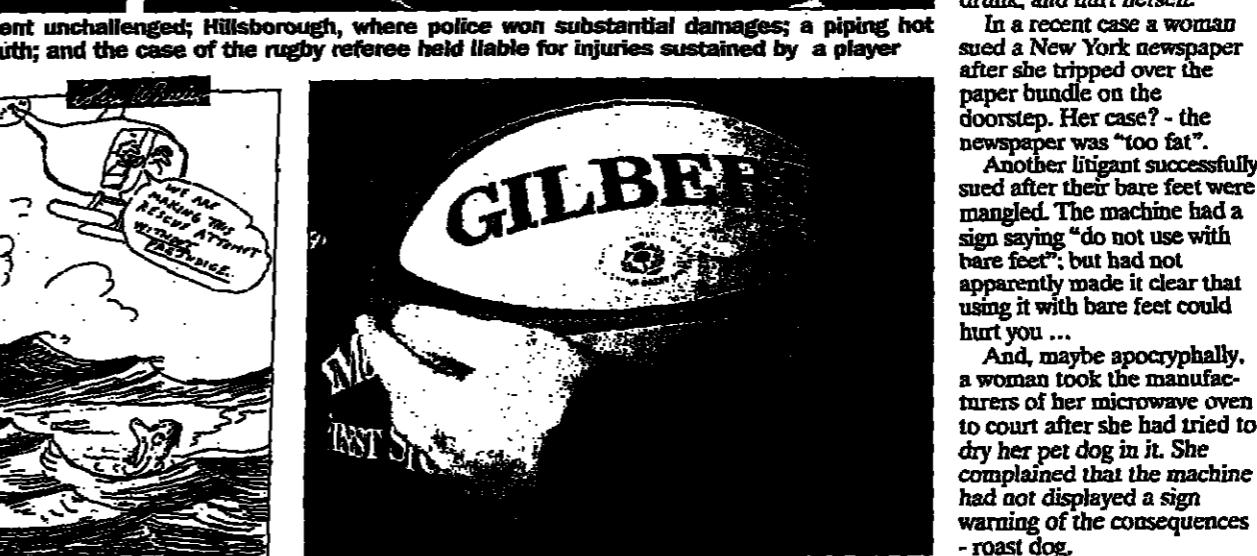
Since M Blanc opened his new restaurant Le Petit Blanc in Walton Street two weeks ago, he has been in hot water with his neighbours. Oxford City Council has been flooded with complaints about cooking smells and noise wafting out of the premises from early in the morning to late at night.

It transpires M Blanc has already started serving breakfast from 8 o'clock in the morning which means that the staff start arriving around 6.30. The staff don't leave until 1.30am which gives the residents about five hours sleep. The neighbours

are open the whole time and chefs are notoriously loud I'm told.

Other complaints include visitors parking in places reserved for locals. "They are blatantly taking my notice of the restrictions," said Ms Spencer, chair of the Oxford Council's planning committee. M Blanc also still has to obtain permission for the new shop from a disabled access ramp, air conditioners, a new chimney and an extension at the back.

Last Friday the planning committee noted it was "extremely concerned" that M Blanc had gone ahead and opened the restaurant when not everything had been resolved.



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SMOKING CAUSES CANCER

Chief Medical Officers' Warning

## 4 news

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## 15,000 guns handed over in amnesty

JASON BENNETT  
Crime Correspondent

More than 15,000 firearms were handed over to the police during last month's gun amnesty - fewer than a third of the number surrendered following the Hungerford massacre. However, the police and Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, insisted yesterday that the total was a good result and would make Britain's streets safer.

The problem of firearms and the willingness of organised criminals to use them was further illustrated yesterday by the disclosure that chief constables were carrying out a study in an attempt to address Britain's growing gun culture.

June's amnesty, in which people were able to hand in firearms without fear of prosecution as long as the weapons had not been used in a crime, was provoked by the Dunblane massacre in March in which 16 schoolchildren and their teacher were shot dead.

In total 15,360 firearms, tens of thousands of rounds of ammunition, and hundreds of other weapons were surrendered, although not all the results have been finalised yet. This compares with 48,000 in 1988 after the Hungerford killings, and 25,000 during an amnesty in 1988.

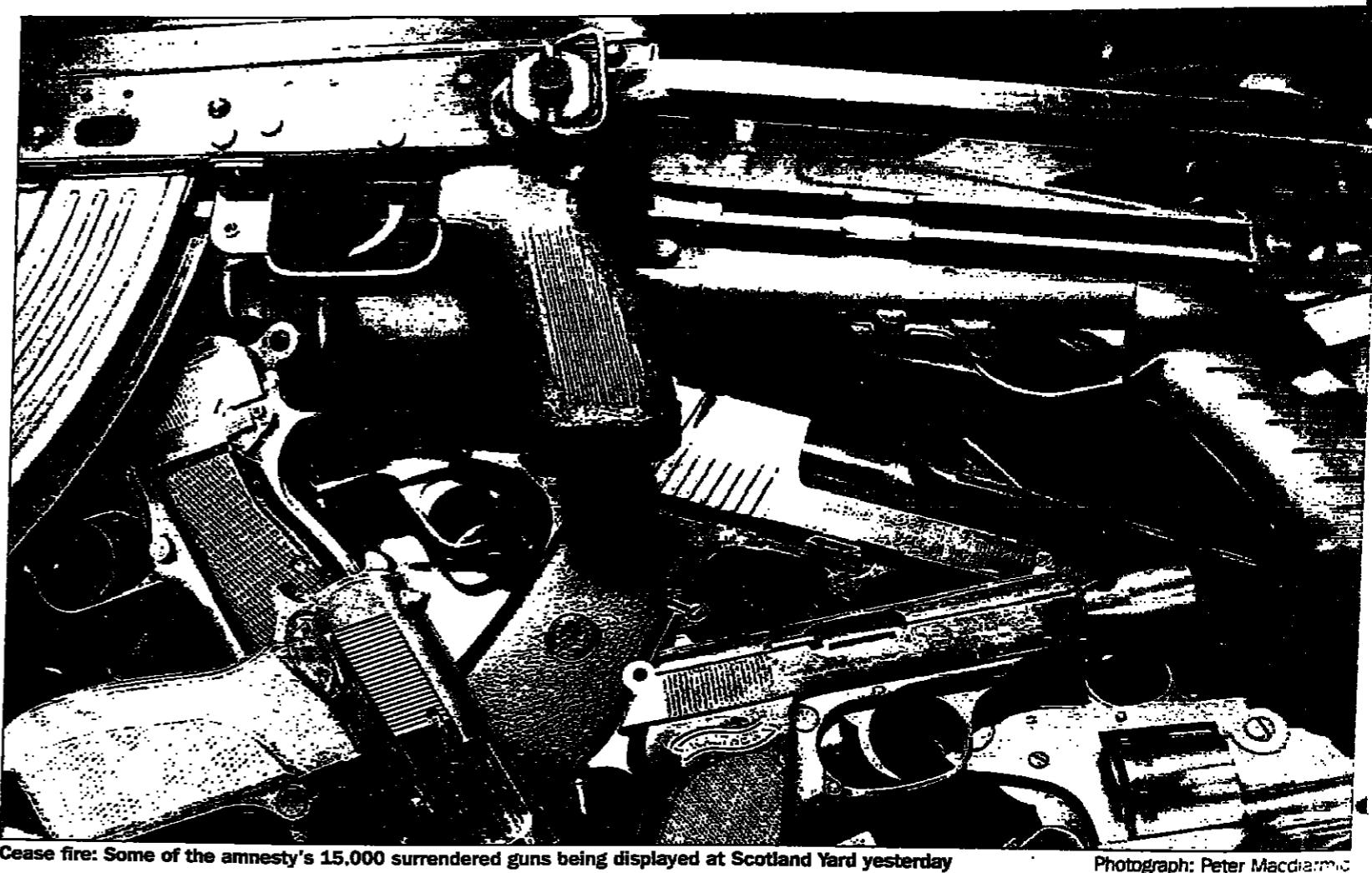
The largest number for a single force in the latest amnesty was about 1,000 in Devon and Cornwall. In London 682 guns were handed over. The limitations of the scheme - criminals were never likely to hand over their weapons - was revealed by the small number - 120 - recovered in Merseyside, an area which has recently experienced a spate of gang shootings and killings.

In Scotland there were 2,543 firearms, with 890 in Strathclyde, which includes Glasgow, but only 152 in the small force of Central Scotland which includes Dunblane.

Despite the relatively low numbers Mr Howard said: "Every gun taken out of circulation reduces the risk of lives being lost. This will make it much harder for criminals to steal guns. The amnesty is only part of the battle against gun related crime, the police will continue to work tirelessly to stop criminals using guns."

Sir Jim Sharples, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers and Chief Constable in Merseyside, speaking on the eve of the ACPO summer conference in Manchester, said yesterday he was not disappointed with the results. "We believe the amnesty was extremely worthwhile. It was never going to be a panacea to all the problems relating to the misuse of firearms, but it allowed for a significant number to be taken out of circulation."

He went on to reveal that ACPO is carrying out a survey to discover how many guns are being sold and used by organised criminals. He said: "Some forces are finding very significant increases in robbery and armed robbery."



Cease fire: Some of the amnesty's 15,000 surrendered guns being displayed at Scotland Yard yesterday

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

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## 'Sack bad teachers inside two months'

JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

School governors should be able to sack bad teachers and heads in a process taking just two months, Professor Michael Barber, adviser to both the Government and the Labour Party, said yesterday.

At present procedures for removing teachers can take up to nine months. Professor Barber said it should take two from when a head first tells someone that they are not up to the job.

Successive ministers have said that it should be easier for schools to get rid of bad teachers, and both Tony Blair, the Labour leader, and David Blunkett, the party's education spokesman, have said that governors are taking too long to dismiss bad teachers but have not put a time-limit on the process.

Professor Barber, dean of new initiatives at London University's Institute of Education, said: "The procedure for getting rid of bad teachers is too cumbersome and slow. Schools ought to be able to complete it in a couple of months and still allow for all the appropriate appeals and due process."

Speaking at a conference at the institute, he said schools and local authorities were making big strides in school improvement. But removing incompetent teachers was a vital part of rescuing failing schools and the collection of evidence about poor performance often delayed the operation.

Governors and heads are responsible for taking action against poor teachers so central government's influence is limited. From September school

inspectors will report confidentially to heads on the best and worst teachers.

Labour has said that it intends to discuss with local authorities and teacher unions how poor teachers could be dismissed more quickly without jeopardising staff rights. It believes the present process fails to strike the right balance.

Professor Barber said: "Teacher unions would benefit if they were leading the advocacy for streamlining procedures against incompetent teachers. Lots of their members and the public want to see them working towards improving quality."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, said: "Bad teachers can already be sacked within two months. It is only incompetent managers who can't get rid of incompetent teachers."

He said that teachers had to be given between five and ten days notice of dismissal. If there was an appeal that would take another five or ten days.

"For a person who is marginal it might take several months. For someone who is a disaster the information should be readily available if heads and governors have been doing their jobs properly." Prevention, he said, was better than cure. Governors should not employ weak teachers in the first place.

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, has estimated that there are 15,000 incompetent teachers. He believes the present rules which prevent appraisal reports being used as part of disciplinary proceedings should be re-examined.

## Written driving exam fails test

CLARE GARNER

"Which one of the following best describes the new written driving test? (a) a waste of time (b) a rip-off (c) a doodle, or (d) yet another way for the government to make money."

Had the first candidate at the Oxford test centre been faced with this multiple-choice question yesterday they would still be there now, trying to decide which box to tick.

As it was, none of the questions were this taxing and everyone was out in good time - some after just seven minutes.

The biggest grumble from the 54 candidates who sat the test in a second floor office in the Westway shopping centre was the cost. The fact that some of the questions were "pathetic" came a close second.

The mood beforehand was one of resignation. They had already got off to an unlucky start. Had they submitted their applications a little earlier they would not have been there in the first place. Afterwards, the candidates were incredulous.

Bryoni Florey, 17, a student who lives 15 miles outside Oxford, had refused to fork out £9.99 for the Driving Standards Authority (DSA) book featuring the 600 questions from which 35 would be chosen. As it turned out it did not matter.

"Some of the questions were really quite stupid," she said. "Like I was given a picture of a Coke can, a sandwich box, a lemonade bottle and a petrol can and asked where I would carry my petrol." She added that the test was a "rip-off".

Seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Galpin had bought the £9.99 book for fear of failing and having to pay another £15 for a re-take. "I can't believe they're charging £15 on top of £28.50 for the practical test, then there's £9.99 for the booklet, £20 for a double lesson before the road test, not to mention travel to and from the test centres," she said.

Anne Marie Worth, 44, regretted not taking her test earlier. "It's just another way to make money," she said.

"It's not going to make people better drivers."

**Middle-age crisis:** Bleak outlook for the over-50s as the employment market declines and pension provisions reach overload

## Jobless gloom for third-agers

**BARRIE CLEMENT**

Labour Editor

A stark warning was delivered yesterday on the future of Britain unless millions of jobs are created over the next decade to mop up unemployment and to cope with increasing working-age and retiring-age populations.

The country's current pension provisions are inadequate, and many of the older generation will find themselves destitute when they reach retiring age unless the workforce can be expanded to provide for them.

This was the bleak outlook forecast for "third agers" — those aged 50 or more who are still able to work — by a report prepared for a conference held today by the Carnegie Third Age Programme.

The economy will have to expand to provide work for these "third agers" and for those who have just reached working age.

The report was put together by Chris Trinder of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Richard Worsley of the Carnegie Third Age Programme.

The study, *The Third Age: The Continuing Challenge*, argues that Britain will not only need

to create work for the two million people who are currently on the unemployment register, but also another 1.4 million jobs — 900,000 for men, 500,000 for women — over the next 11 years to meet demand.

The report says that the decline in the number of full-time, secure, pensioned jobs and the increase in the number of part-time jobs and short-term contracts have serious consequences for both young and older people, "especially when coupled with discrimination against both young and old on the grounds of their age".

The deputy governor of the Bank of England, Howard Davies, was another contributor to the report.

He points out that one in five people aged between 35 and 49 and one in three aged between 50 and 60 is currently unemployed or inactive.

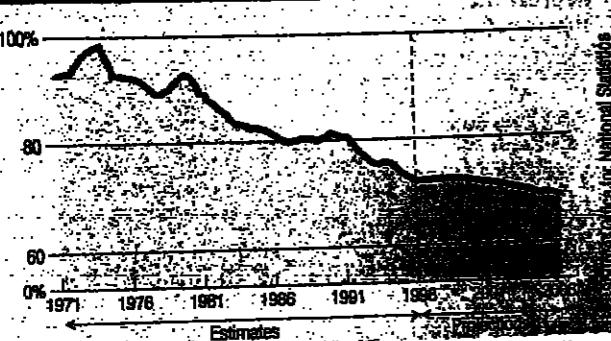
"Most of these are perfectly fit and healthy, and yet the majority of them have left the labour market forever," he said.

If the upturn in the labour market has merely been delayed, then better fortunes for older workers could still materialise, says the study. But this is seen as unlikely, as despite a slow economic growth in the last three years the "adverse" employment situation has remained.



Lean cut: A bummie, or porter, outside the restored East Market at Smithfield meat market in the City of London. As part of a £60m deal which includes the rebuilding of the west wing, the City Corporation insisted on reducing the number of bummies from 90 to 30. Photograph: Brian Harris

Economic activity rates for males aged 55-59 years



## Boring old rockers get short shrift in court

**REBECCA FOWLER**

It was a disappointing day for the ageing men of rock. The members of the band Status Quo were refused a hearing by a High Court Judge yesterday of their claims that Radio One ignores their music because they are too old.

The band, which this year celebrates its thirtieth anniversary, had hoped to set a precedent in its case against the radio station, which snubbed their latest hit single, *Fun Fun*, allegedly on the basis that the group was too old and boring.

Mr Justice Collins, 53, a relatively youthful judge from the same generation as the players, said that Radio One "regards Status Quo as somewhat conservative and old hat".

He ruled that in spite of the band's belief that their hit records had been deliberately excluded from Radio One's playlist, the BBC was under no obligation to play their songs, new or old, however commercially successful they are.

Mr Justice Collins told the group's barrister, Kenneth Parker, QC, "Maybe they don't like your client's music. They don't have to like it."

He added: "They are not given to promoting this type of music, and it is not the type of music they are encouraging people to listen to."

Among the other casualties of the alleged purge on senior rockers at Radio One are Sir Cliff Richard, Barry Manilow, Michael Barrymore, Mr Blobby and Rod Stewart, believed to be dropped as the station tried to woo a younger audience.

But Francis Rossi, 46, and Rick Parfitt, 47, the leaders of Status Quo, which has had more than 50 hits, are adamant that Radio One listeners should be allowed to listen to their music. The pair, who were not in

court, say they are only demanding equal treatment from the BBC.

According to Mr Parker, Status Quo are "one of the most successful pop/rock bands in history", but they were the subject of a "capricious" ban.

He claimed there was "no consistency at all" to the music chosen by Radio One, and pointed out that other bands from the same generation are given airtime.

The oldies to whom Radio One will give radio time, according to Status Quo, include David Bowie, 49, Meatloaf, 47 and Tina Turner, 57.

The Rolling Stones — dubbed "the Strolling Bones" with reference to the longevity of their careers — Queen and Van Morrison are also played.

However, Mr Justice Collins, an old Etonian who, according to insiders, does not listen to the music of Status Quo, suggested they "pressure enough people to tell Radio One they won't listen any more if they don't play Status Quo".

He also said the band, which has issued a writ against the BBC for £250,000, should pursue private action for breach of contract. He refused them leave for a judicial review. The BBC was awarded legal costs estimated in excess of £50,000.

Matthew Bannister, 37, the station's controller, denied that the band has been treated unfairly. He insisted the station, which broadcasts 1,400 songs a week to around 13m listeners, was committed to playing works by new artists.

"We are delighted that the judge has recognised that Radio One has changed," he said.

"We are the UK's leading contemporary music station, and we consider all records for inclusion against that brief and on musical merit."

Leading article, page 3



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## politics

## Labour to slash £100m from NHS red tape

NICHOLAS TIMMINS  
Public Policy Editor

Labour offered a first taste yesterday of how it plans to cut bureaucracy in the NHS, claiming that £100m, which proposes to release from "red tape", will allow an extra 100,000 patients to be treated.

But its moves were attacked by managers as "a blunt tool" which risks financial control in the NHS. They said it remained deeply unclear how Labour's version of the NHS would work.

Labour would restore the right of all GPs to refer patients to the hospital of their choice, Harriet Harman, the shadow health secretary, said. This would end the system of prior approval and of the invoices involved in the system of extra-contractual referrals, which costs £7m a year to run.

In addition, it will impose a further first-year across-the-board cut of £50m on health authority and trust management costs, based on bringing all of them down to the average. On

Labour's figures that amounts to roughly a 6-per-cent cut on top of the 8-per-cent real-terms cut which Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, has imposed for this year.

The pledges came at a press conference where Ms Harman stepped up Labour's claim to be "scrapping" the internal market and the thousands of contracts and hundreds of thousands of invoices it has generated.

But she failed to spell out how hospitals would be reimbursed for patients treated

outside their boundaries, saying there were "a number of simple mechanisms" for doing that.

Karen Caines, Director of the Institute for Health Services Management, said managers needed to know how hospitals would be paid for the treatment they provided, and how Labour would contain NHS expenditure.

It was clear what Labour was against, she said. "But we have absolutely no detail about how Labour's system will work. We don't know how the mon-

ey is going to flow round it, how they are going to live within budgets, or what the transaction costs of what they propose will be. It really is time that they spell all this out."

Mr Dorrell, who has already ordered changes to the extra-contractual referral system, which will cut its £22m cost to £10m, said it was "the oldest mirage in the book for an opposition party to say it can do all sorts of wonderful things by simply making the administration more efficient."

Ms Harman insisted, however, that "cutting bureaucracy will transform services. One hundred thousand patients could be treated by cutting £100m from the £1.5bn extra bureaucracy of the Tory internal market."

The computer systems used

for invoicing would be used to book individually-timed patients' appointments. This would cut the five million outpatient appointments missed each year, as they conflict with work or family commitments.

The NHS, she said, must fit in with patients' lives "rather than patients having to fit their lives around the NHS".

Alan Milburn, her front-bench colleague, said the NHS now had more than 50 types of manager, including sales managers, contract managers, business and development managers and marketing managers.

"Administrative costs now absorb almost £12 of every £100 of NHS spending, when before the internal market it was less than £9," he said.

The United Leeds Teaching Hospital now sent out 12,500 invoices a year for treatment, including 2,900 for extra contractual referrals (ECRs), while one of the Newcastle trusts sent out more than 15,000 a third for ECRs.

Labour's £80m management cut would be achieved by setting a cap on each region, which assumes that spending in Trusts and health authorities is at the national average, leaving the regions to make the savings across all of them.

## Carlile quits to care for his daughter, 15

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

Alex Carlile, a senior Liberal Democrat spokesman, yesterday announced that he was quitting Parliament to spend more time with his mentally ill daughter, raising fresh concerns over the clash between family life and politicians' careers at Westminster.

Mr Carlile's 15-year-old daughter, Ruth, has been seriously ill for nearly two years with clinical depression, but that became acute in the past few months and she is now an in-patient at a psychiatric hospital. Mr Carlile said that many MPs encountered stress in dealing with family life and careers at Westminster. "Ruth and I are very close. There has to be more than a biological relationship," he said.

His daughter's need for her father to be around more often, even if it means giving up his career, will strike a chord in the homes of many MPs. Some Labour frontbenchers are concerned at the extent to which they have been away from home while their children have grown up in northern constituencies.

"It is clear to me that I can play an important part in Ruth's eventual recovery but only if I am more a part of Ruth's life than my activities as an MP have enabled me to be," Mr Carlile said. The MP for Montgomery, in Powys, who has a 5,309 majority, has resigned to help his sick daughter.

jority, took the unusual step of appearing at a Westminster press conference with his wife, Frances, to announce the reason for his decision to step down within months of a pending general election.

Mrs Carlile said: "This has been a stressful and difficult decision for Alex. He is a person of strong loyalties – to his constituents, his party and to his family.

"It has taken us all some time to adjust to the extremely slow pace of recovery from mental illness and the time needed to help Ruth. He just wants to be there for her."

As leader of the Liberal Democrats in Wales, Mr Carlile said he was away from home "an awful lot". "There have been huge numbers of occasions when I have arrived home when my daughter has been asleep in bed and I have left before she got up in the morning."

The Jopling report tried to tackle the problem of the stress on MPs' families by reducing the number of late-night sittings and allowing MPs to have more long weekends by scrapping sittings on many Fridays.

The reform of MPs' hours was given a boost by the resignation from Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet of Sir Norman Fowler, to spend more time with his family. He later helped to run John Major's general election campaign but never returned to office.



Alex Carlile, who is resigning to help his sick daughter: "I can play an important part in Ruth's eventual recovery but only if I am more a part of her life than my activities as an MP have enabled me to be"

Photograph: Edward Sykes

## Robertson savaged over devolution

JAMES CUSICK

Labour's Scottish affairs spokesman was given a rough ride in the first meeting of the cross-party Scottish constitutional convention since Tony Blair last week announced Labour would hold a referendum on devolution.

At the meeting in Edinburgh, which George Robertson himself described as "stormy", Labour was accused by the Liberal Democrats of placing a "great strain on the home rule clause". Jim Wallace, leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, said the "assurances" Mr Robertson had given on devolution. However he said Labour remained on "trial" and said that "the home rule clause cannot readily withstand another unilateral bombshell of this kind."

Mr Robertson and Labour's organising secretary in Scotland, Jack McConnell, were effectively cross-examined by a hostile prosecution. One observer who attended the meeting said that despite Mr Robertson's reaffirmation that the Labour leadership remained committed to devolutionists, recent events meant Labour had lost the trust of many in the convention executive. With the convention held together by a light political glue of ties and co-operation there will now be doubts over what role it holds.

By stepping over the agreement signed by Labour last November Mr Blair may have consigned the convention to the role of lobby organisation rather than the influential policy grouping.

Esther Robertson, the convention's co-ordinating officer, said: "George Robertson got a hard time and no punches were pulled." However Mr Robertson seems to have won back some ground. Mrs Robertson said: "Nobody doubts George Robertson's commitment to

devolution. He clearly wants to be the Scottish Secretary who delivers a Scottish parliament."

The Scottish National Party (SNP) tried to take full advantage of what one Labour source in London dismissed as "some local difficulty". The SNP launched a poster campaign in Scotland with the message: "Tony doesn't give a XX for devolution". The SNP leader, Alex Salmond, said: "People in Scotland no longer believe a word New Labour says on the Scottish constitution."

Labour's own view of its performance in front of the convention was that this "valuable opportunity" had been successful and that the Blair tactics had been accepted.

Before the convention meets again in late July Mr Robertson will almost certainly have to decide on the tactics he will employ against the potential dissidents in his party. Up to a dozen Scottish Labour MPs have privately voiced their dissent.

From comments yesterday the Labour leadership in Scotland believe they may have weathered the worst of the devolution row and are privately celebrating their belief that they have disarmed the "tartan" campaign waged by Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland.

On Friday, when John Major speaks in Dumfries on devolution, Labour and the SNP will have their first opportunity to battle over the new territory laid out by Tony Blair.

Crucially it will also be the first opportunity for Labour's dissidents to show their potentially disruptive hand. Yesterday George Galloway, MP for Glasgow Hillhead, said: "I've already made clear that a referendum is an extremely bad idea, presented in a manner that has made it even worse."

Alex Salmond, page 13

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## Portillo calls for help in sale row

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

Michael Portillo yesterday appealed to Cabinet colleagues to support him in the increasingly bitter battle over the £2 billion of armed forces married quarters.

Amid growing allegations of a "get Portillo" campaign by supporters of Tory MP John Redwood, the Secretary of State for Defence asked for backing as the senior ministers assembled for a political strategy meeting of the Cabinet in Downing Street.

The call for help in countering the campaign by Tory rebels against the sale of service houses underlined the fears by Mr Portillo that he is being damaged by the affair.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, later gave his support to the embattled minister. Mr Rifkind, Mr Portillo's predecessor at the Ministry of Defence, privately denied claims by the opposition that he had always supported the move.

Mr Rifkind said it became known that he believed the armed forces accepted the need to change quarters as part of their service. He supported the sale which will re-

lease £100m to pay for improvements to accommodation.

Mr Redwood yesterday intervened for the first time in the controversy when he called for a compromise to underpin the assurances given in the Commons by the Prime Minister last week that forces families will not be required to leave quarters against their will.

The Redwood camp were adamant that they were not part of a campaign to undermine Mr Portillo's standing in the party. The Secretary of State warned his critics not to try to turn the issue into a personality contest.

"I just hope it is not so, because it is a very important issue. I hope nobody is playing politics with the service families. My only concern is the issue and to get the policy exactly right," Mr Portillo told BBC Radio 4.

Last week 64 Tory MPs led by Julian Brazier, a supporter of Mr Redwood, signed a Commons motion seeking to delay the plan to sell 58,000 homes – raising £1.1 billion for the Treasury – which would then be rented back by the MoD. More than 20 have since withdrawn their names after heavy lobbying by ministers and Government whips.

## Whitehall recruits science high-flyers

More fast-track civil service jobs are to be thrown open to the recruitment of 50 middle managers from outside the service, initially rising to 500 a year by the year 2000, the Government announced yesterday, writes Chris Blackhurst.

The first White Paper devoted to the competitiveness and training of officials set out targets for civil service managers in the years to come. At present 20 per cent of the fast-stream graduates' entry are scientists and engineers. Ministers want that proportion to rise to 33 per cent by 1998.

The policy of going outside for recruits and holding competitions for posts will be widened across all senior grades and extended down to the middle ranks. An initiative to be

launched in the autumn will see the recruitment of 50 middle managers from outside the service, initially rising to 500 a year by the year 2000.

The aim of the changes, said Roger Freeman, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the civil service minister, was to improve the service's performance, especially compared with its foreign rivals.

The Civil Service, along with other sectors of the economy, must face up to the challenges of the skills revolution and global competitiveness if the country as a whole is to succeed in the future. The message of the recent Competitiveness White Paper is one which must be made to work in the Civil Service," he said.

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# Bargain Proms for less than three tenners

SIMON TAIT

The Proms, 102 years old this month, are taking on the comparatively young Three Tenors with an advertising campaign aimed at hitting where it hurts: the box office.

This week, just as Messers Pavarotti, Carreras and Domingo limber up before taking the Wembley Arena stage in front of an audience of 60,000 on Saturday, the Proms, which begin on 19 July, are launching their £100,000 Satchi and Satchi campaign early.

Posters on London Underground sites, and advertisements on taxis, buses and in newspapers and magazines, challenge potential concertgoers: "Five operas for less than three tenners", adding that you can reserve seats to see Verdi's *Don Carlos*, Weill's *The Silver Lake*, Handel's *Semele*, Beethoven's *Leonora* and Berg's *Lulu* for £4.00 each.

Gentlemanly behaviour dies hard, however. The advertisement does not mention that the least you must pay to see the Three Tenors is £110 – all the £35 tickets have already been sold – and the top price is £550. The average price for the Proms' offering is a mere £22.50.

When the Wembley extra-

ganza is no more than an expensive memory, the Proms publicity will continue to emphasise the lack of stiffness with copy lines like: "Prom, not prim", "Every night at the Proms," and "The Proms can make you cry, especially if you forget to book".

The campaign follows the marketing play of the Proms' launch in May when £50,000 was spent on a giveaway CD bearing cheery encouragement from the likes of Joanna Lumley, Jeremy Paxman, John Peel and Trevor Brooking with their choices from this year's programme.

The Proms have never before used an advertising agency, and previously have spent more than this year's budget on simple reprinting of the programme cover as posters.

Nicholas Kenyon, controller of Radio 3 and director of Proms for the first time this year, said: "The Proms have always been the place where we made it clear that music was accessible, but a lot of people are still a bit wary about taking that first taste."

The success of the Three Tenors was a bit of a bolt from the blue, and what has happened in the record industry since does not altogether bear



Perfect pitch: (left to right) Domingo, Carreras and Pavarotti stand by in the Wembley Stadium. Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

**Tense tenor: Let no one sneeze**

DAVID LISTER

The "flower depollinator" is limbering up. His importance cannot be underestimated. If he is not at his most alert, a sneeze could destroy the climax of "Nessun Dorma".

Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras are coming, and the special arrangements for the Wembley Stadium concert are being put into effect.

Among the key backstage personnel will be the depollinator. Pavarotti is allergic to pollen, and the organisers confirmed yesterday that someone would be employed to depollinate any bouquets that are presented to him, and from any flowers near the stage.

It is a crucial role in the Three Tenors' first performance together in Britain, and their last performance together anywhere. But the depollinator is not alone in going into the fast stages of rehearsal.

All 85 of Wembley's in-house chefs have been on a training course at Carluccio's restaurant

in Covent Garden to prepare for the banquet that Antonio Carluccio will serve the Three Tenors and invited guests after the concert. On the menu are venison, champagne, pasta with six different types of wild mushrooms, and lime pie. Here again, Pavarotti will be in need of special attention. His new girlfriend's insistence that he diet means a separate menu will have to be arranged for him.

Meanwhile the organisers of the British end of the world tour are bracing themselves for an onslaught from photographers. When the tenors played Los Angeles, the photographers stood in front of the front row for the first aria, as is customary. However, it was not just any old front row. The likes of Frank Sinatra, Kim Basinger and Henry Kissinger grew angry at having their view impeded and fierce arguments ensued.

To avoid affronting the VIPs at Wembley, the Three Tenors are insisting that cameramen be banished to the cheap(er) seats.

## DAILY POEM

### Eyelids

By Stephen Dobyns

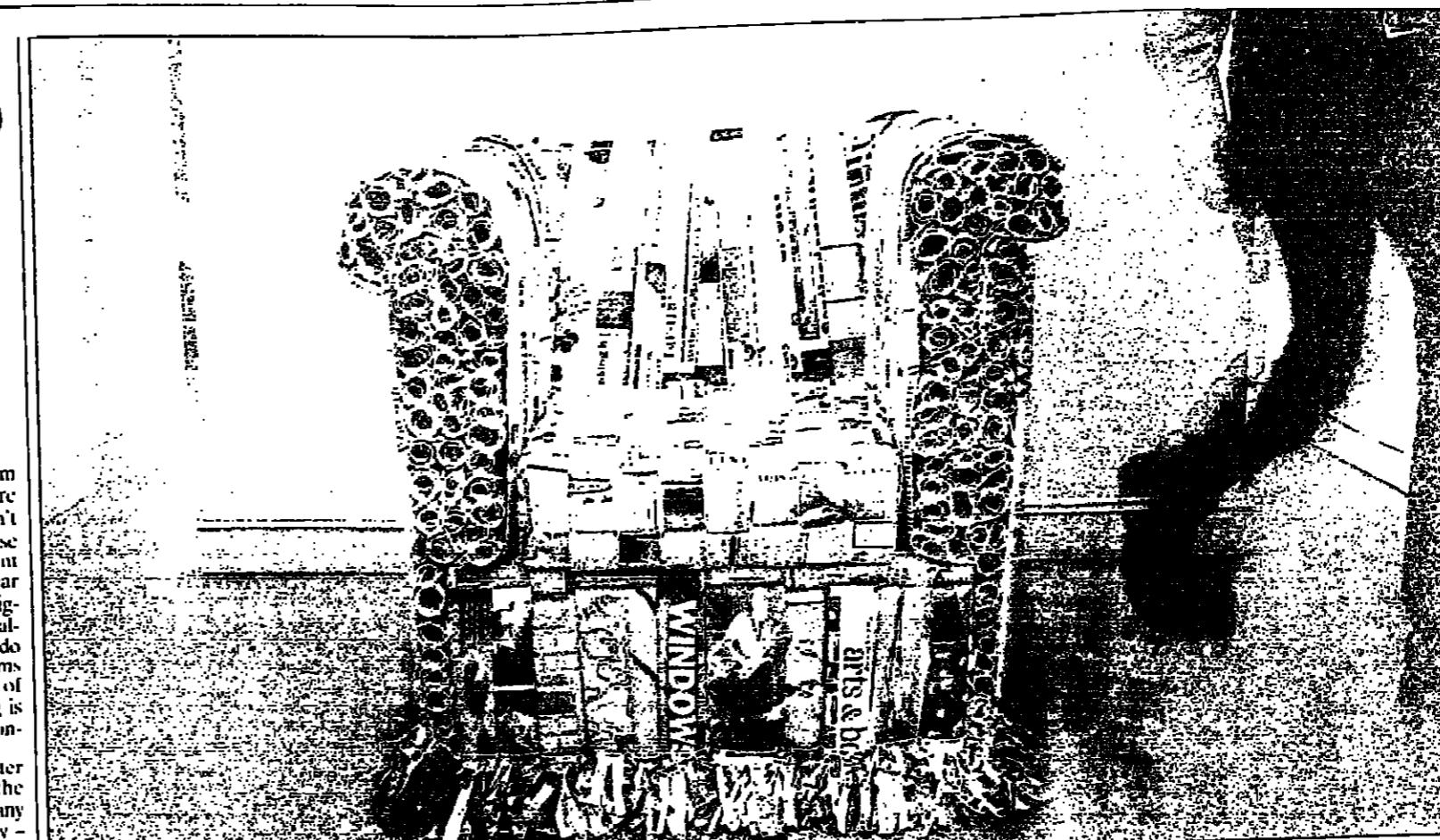
*Sky defiers of the existential world,  
you draw your veil across the unpleasant,  
then the head turns away, the body turns away,  
the feet trudge off toward someplace nice, but you,  
you were the first, you drew the initial curtain.*

*Oh, cautious celebrators of the decorous,  
how much has gone unwitnessed or unjudged,  
how much remains unchanged due to your benign  
interference? Why reduce the world to this  
middle range of behavior, as if the story*

*contained only happy couples on lawn chairs  
nibbling macaroons and sipping soothing drinks.  
Don't you fear the darkness will squeeze you tight  
because of your ignorance of it?  
Oh, my sky ones, forgive this desecration –*

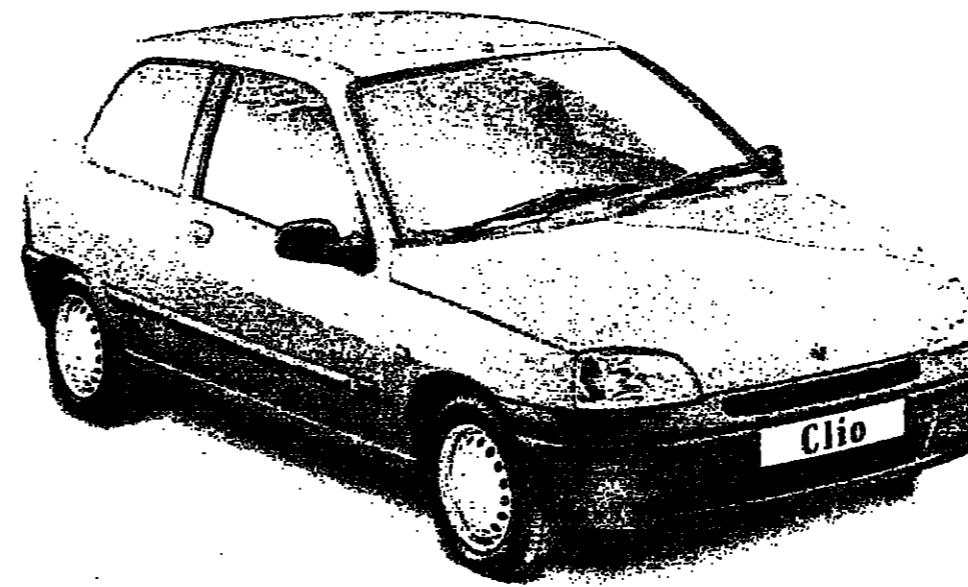
*the chrome of the scissors will sparkle in your eyes,  
while your being closed only simplifies my task.  
A few quick snips and the light will shine forever.  
Gaze upon it. See that fire, those cold stones.  
This is the world to love. There is no other.*

Stephen Dobyns is well-known as both a poet and a crime writer in his native US, a spinner of dark, extravagant fables that, in the words of one critic, "bite their own tails". Bloodaxe has recently published *Vélocités: New and Selected Poems*, resplendent in a Rothko cover, which draws on 20 years of verse from his first collection *Concurring Beasts* to his latest *From Body Traffic*.

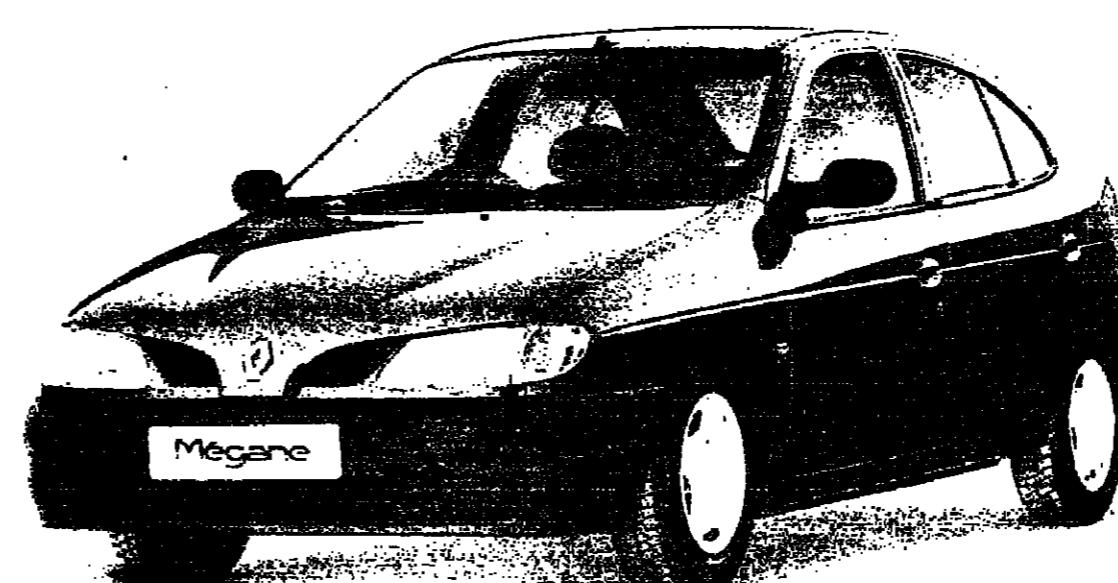


Write stuff: 'Sunday Afternoon Chair', an exhibit by Bryan Johnson made from newspaper front pages, which is part of a display by furniture design graduates from Parham College, Dorset, being shown at The Gallery, Cork Street, central London, until Saturday. Photograph: Peter Diarmid

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## Yeltsin's health overshadows final campaign

TONY BARBER  
Moscow

The issue of Boris Yeltsin's shaky health dominated the final day of campaigning in Russia's presidential election yesterday, injecting last-minute tensions and uncertainty into a contest in which he had been expected to cruise to victory.

Resurfacing after a five-day absence from public view, Mr Yeltsin delivered a two-minute, televised election address during which he looked pale, rigid, drained of emotion and a shadow of the man who had campaigned so vigorously in the build-up to the first round of voting on 16 June.

"I know exactly what to do. I have the strength, will and decisiveness for that. What is needed now is your support. Every vote is decisive," Mr Yeltsin told viewers, reading from an autocue. "If you do not vote, that is also a choice, but a choice against Russia."

Provided that the turnout in tomorrow's vote is 60 per cent or more of Russia's 108 million electorate, Mr Yeltsin's campaign team remains confident that he will defeat Gennady Zyuganov, the Communist challenger. Barring an upset, the central questions in Russian politics therefore turn less on the election result than on Mr Yeltsin's ability to survive a four-year term in office and to restore stability to a system of government shaken from top to bottom by the dizzying rise to prominence of his new strongman, Alexander Lebed.

Mr Yeltsin, who is 65, has already passed the life expectancy of the average Russian male, whose enthusiasm for vodka and vulnerability to heart trouble he shares. He achieved his first-round success over Mr Zyuganov by 35 to 32 per cent at the cost of an exhausting campaign schedule that saw him climbing down coalmines, dancing the twist and criss-crossing 11 time zones to rally crowds with a message of uncompromising anti-Communism.

Yet his Kremlin advisers have inadvertently raised doubts about his true condition with a cloud of contradictory statements that recall the attempts in the 1980s to conceal the attempts of the illnesses of a string of ageing Soviet leaders. His Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, amended the official version of events yesterday by attributing his absence not to a loss of voice but to a cold, yet in his televised comeback appearance Mr Yeltsin sounded neither hoarse nor nasal. It became apparent that something remained amiss, when the presidential press service announced the postponement of a meeting in Moscow between Mr Yeltsin and the leaders of Ukraine and Moldova. "He's in bad shape. That's quite clear," Mr Zyuganov told reporters before Mr Yeltsin's television address.

The mainly pro-Yeltsin Russian press, radio and television networks, desperate to prevent a Communist victory that could threaten freedom of speech and their staffs' livelihoods, loyalty avoided comment on the president's health. However, their failure to touch on such a topical issue intensified the eerie atmosphere of an election campaign in which the incumbent favourite abruptly dropped out of sight just before polling day, and in which the antics of an army general-turned-politician seem as important as tomorrow's voting trends.

Mr Lebed, the general who was appointed to two powerful national security posts after

finishing third in the election's first round, has ventured far outside his official areas of responsibility with a flurry of controversial public statements on the Russian constitution and on economic, cultural and religious policy. His often illiberal remarks bear the imprint of his soldierly background and appear to have been made without any authorisation or consultation with Mr Yeltsin or his campaign strategists. Not content with denouncing Western cultural influences in Russia and condemning Mormons as "mould and scum", Mr Lebed has also betrayed anti-Semitic tendencies. Responding last week to a nationalist supporter who prefaced a question to him with an apologetic laugh, Mr Lebed said: "You call yourself a Cossack, but your approach is Jewish."

He has demanded more state control of the economy and "punitive nationalisation", proposals that were absent from his first-round campaign and appear to place him ideologically closer to Mr Zyuganov than to Mr Yeltsin. Mr Lebed, who recently expressed pride in the fact that he has never been outside the former Soviet Union, has also called for much tighter control of foreign travel. The former general has even challenged the constitutional system under which Mr Yeltsin has governed Russia since 1993 by calling for the restoration of the vice-presidency, a post he wishes to endow with military decision-making powers.

Unless he is reined in, it seems likely that post-election Russia will witness a ferocious struggle for influence between Mr Lebed and rival elements in the Kremlin, with the stakes all the greater on account of Mr Yeltsin's uncertain health.

Spitting image: A puppeteer in Moscow preparing a model of Boris Yeltsin as a railway worker for a satirical television programme

Photograph: Reuter



## SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

A French court gave Bernard Tapie the businessman and former cabinet minister, 10-year suspended jail sentence for fraud, illegal conversion of a year.

The court in Béthune, northern France, found Tapie guilty of misappropriating funds from his firm, a manufacturer of weightlifting equipment, as part of his defunct business empire. Reuter - Paris

The body of another British national has been found in Oman, bringing the number of people who drowned in flash floods in the Gulf Arab state to eight. This brings the number of Britons drowned in the flood on Friday to five. Reuter - Muscat

A Singapore court convicted a grandmother aged 72 for owning a Bible and other literature published by the banned Jehovah's Witnesses. Yu Nguk Ding, a retired nurse, faces up to two years jail. She is expected to be sentenced today.

Yu is the oldest person ever tried under the city state's Undesirable Publications Act. The Jehovah's Witnesses were banned under Singapore's Societies Act in 1972, because their male followers refused to carry out compulsory military duty. Reuter - Singapore

Fernando de la Rúa was elected mayor of Buenos Aires, trouncing Argentinian President Carlos Menem's Peronist party. It was the first time that the mayor had been elected, rather than named by the President.

Some believe that Mr de la Rúa, a member of the conservative Radical Party and currently a senator, may use the post as a trampoline to launch his own presidential bid in 1999. Pita Davison

Muslim and Croat nationalist parties took more than 90 per cent of the vote in European Union-sponsored elections in the divided city of Mostar, in southern Bosnia, according to the unofficial returns.

The Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA), which rules east Mostar, won 46 per cent and the separatist Croats who run west Mostar gained 45 per cent in Sunday's balloting for a single city council, the joint electoral commission said. Reuter - Mostar

A car bomb exploded outside a security firm which is headed by a prominent Corsican nationalist in the city of Bastia and up to nine people were injured, police said. Reuter - Ajaccio

Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski published an unspoken attack on the right-wing opposition, saying its calls for a patriotic awakening threatened the country's top goal of European integration.

The worst effects could be a halt in economic growth and the triumph of Euro-scepticism in Poland. Mr Kwasniewski, a former senior communist now turned social democrat, wrote in an article for *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Reuter - Warsaw

Turkish authorities vowed not to yield to the Kurdish guerrillas who killed nine soldiers in a weekend suicide bombing that marked a deadly new phase of the 12-year-old separatist conflict.

"There will be no let up in the struggle against terrorism. Our struggle will continue more powerfully," the new Interior Minister, Mehmet Agar, told reporters in a visit to the eastern town of Lice, where the attack occurred on Sunday.

The bombing overshadowed the appointment two days earlier of the country's first Islamist Prime Minister, Necmettin Erbakan, in a coalition with conservatives. It cast doubt on Mr Erbakan's earlier proposals to neutralise Kurdish nationalists by invoking the spirit of "Muslim brotherhood". Reuter - Ankara

Two people were killed and 12 injured in Lebanon when a pair of motorists used firearms to settle an argument over a minor traffic accident.

Police said a shooting match between the two began after they narrowly escaped a head-on collision, only brushing their wing mirrors. The 12 injured, including two soldiers, were onlookers in the village of Majdal in the northern Lebanese province of Akkar. AP - Akkar

## Eta rejects conditions for peace talks

ELIZABETH NASH  
Madrid

The Basque separatist organisation Eta ended a week-long truce yesterday, dashing the best hopes for years that contacts could be opened with the Spanish government. But the Interior Minister, Jaime Mayor Oreja, said that the government would continue to transfer Eta prisoners to jails nearer their families, a key Eta demand.

In a communiqué published in the newspaper *Egin*, Eta rejected conditions for dialogue

set by Basque political parties, including branches of national parties, but said it remained open to the possibility of talks.

Mr Mayor Oreja said he was disappointed but not surprised at Eta's decision, which he said reflected their isolation and fear.

Madrid initially dismissed the ceasefire as "a trick", saying that it was too short and a mockery, given that Eta still holds a prison officer hostage.

But in the course of last week, the government said it was prepared to open indirect talks with Eta if the organisation ended its

campaign of violence and freed Jose Antonio Ortega Lara whom it kidnapped in January.

It was the first time for seven years that Madrid had publicly countenanced the prospect of talks. In 1989, the Socialist government sent representatives to Algeria to contact exiled Eta leaders, but the talks collapsed and the peace process drowned in a wave of Eta violence.

The present conservative government was elected last March on a strenuously anti-Eta programme, ruling out the possibility of talks. Its about-turn owed

much to the influence of the conservative Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) which, with the Catalans, formed a ruling pact with the minority Popular Party.

The PNV has long urged jaw-jaw rather than war-war as a solution to Basque terrorism and its leader, Xabier Arzalluz, called until the last minute for Eta to prolong its truce, saying this was the earnest wish of the majority of the Basque people.

The agreement to transfer 32 prisoners was negotiated in recent weeks between PNV leaders in the Basque country and the interior ministry. The government's decision, taken for humanitarian reasons and to win ground in Basque public opinion, was cautiously welcomed by Eta's political wing, Herri Batasuna (HB), but fell short of Eta's demand that all 500 prisoners be moved.

lead to a process of internal disintegration," he said yesterday.

One disillusioned former HB leader said recently that Eta's current leadership had become so immersed in its military structures and dogma that it had lost touch with the real world.

The Basque country's PNV interior minister, Juan Maria Atutxa, attributed Eta's rejection of the proffered olive branch to fear. "Eta is undoubtedly afraid to take the road towards conciliation because it is aware that it could

lead to a process of internal disintegration," he said yesterday.

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## Germans eat their words over pruning the tongue

IMRE KARACS  
Bonn

Throw away your German textbooks. As of today, some of the iron rules governing the language of Goethe and Klinsmann are no longer valid. Of the 212 existing spelling regulations, for instance, only 112 will remain.

That's the good news. The bad news is that while the number of rules may have been reduced, the number of exceptions has gone up proportionately. The cumbersome grammar that has driven generations of students to despair has survived the latest attempt to reform the language.

Since 1901 the best brains of the German-speaking world have been pruning *Hochdeutsch* in an effort to bring order to their Babel of vernaculars and dialects. A mere 95 years later, government officials of Austria, Switzerland, Germany and Liechtenstein signed an agreement yesterday to lay down the new rules.

As one might expect when so many different parties are involved - Germany's United front was undermined by its bickering 16 *Länder* - the academics' early revolutionary zest has petered out into a stream of feeble compromises.

The Swiss had already abolished the "ß", because they could not find room for it on their multilingual keyboards.

Now the Germans and Austrians have agreed to the change, replacing the alphabet's Gothic legacy with "ss". Except, that is, in long words, and in the word "ab", the German for "ate".

Many of the commas that bedevil the average German

simplified only slightly. Dogs will stay male, cats female, and girls neuter.

Nor have the reforms resolved the age-old endeavour to achieve linguistic uniformity between the three main German-speaking countries.

When Austria joined the European Union last year, it came with a dowry of 23 "Austroisms", resisted by Germany to the bitter end during the accession talks. Those words are now accepted by the EU, but they are still missing from dictionaries printed in the Federal Republic.

Thus, smokers ordering a packet of cigarettes by computer will henceforth have to type out two extra letters (see box). Spaghetti, however, is allowed to shrink.

More radical proposals have been thrown out. Nouns will still begin with a capital letter, the verb in convoluted sentences will remain at the very end, and the gender rules have been

Writing it the right way  
How the new German should be spelled

OLD NEW  
Zigarette Zigarette  
Paket Packet  
Känguru Känguru  
Restaurant Restorant  
Spaghetti Spagetti  
Ketchup Ketschup  
Crêpe Krepp  
Karamelle Karamell  
Apotheke Apoteke  
(pharmacy) Du du

Leonel Fernandez (above) a US-educated lawyer aged 49, will take over from Joaquin Balaguer on 16 August as President of the Dominican Republic.

Sunday's second round run-off election gave the centrist Liberation Party candidate a narrow victory - by 2.5 percentage points or 71,000 votes - over the Revolutionary Party's Jose Francisco Pena Gomez. Mr Pena Gomez beat Mr Fernandez by seven percentage points in the first round in May but the 89-year-old Mr Balaguer, a Christian Democrat, then urged his supporters to back Mr Fernandez. In doing so, the outgoing president suggested that Mr Pena Gomez, who is black, was of Haitian origin and would unite the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic with mainly black, French-speaking Haiti. Pita Davison

Workers used forklifts to build a new boundary wall for the US military housing complex targeted by terrorists, while top Islamic scholars in Saudi Arabia condemned the bombing as "un-Islamic".

The Air Force's new chief of security in Dhakran told reporters that the new wall and other security measures would be completed this week to better protect the 2,000 American troops living at the Al-Khobar complex. But he warned that no security steps were foolproof. AP - Dhakran

Reclusive North Korea angrily accused the US Congress of trying to cut back on supplying the fuel oil which it desperately needs and threatened to scrap a 1994 landmark nuclear deal with Washington.

The official Korean Central News Agency warned: "If the heavy oil is not supplied in time as scheduled, we will be compelled to reconsider our nuclear freeze". Reuter - Pyongyang

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# Peking throws out Hong Kong protesters

STEVE VINES

Hong Kong

China yesterday gave a vivid description of the lengths it was prepared to go to avoid the voices of opposition from Hong Kong. Eight representatives of the colony's democracy organisations, carrying a 50,000-signature petition against China's plans to dismantle the legislature, were barred from entering Peking in a show of force normally reserved for criminals.

The plane carrying the delegation was surrounded by armed guards when it landed at Peking airport yesterday morning. Eleven gun-toting security police then entered the plane, identified the protesters and seized the special travel documents which allow Hong Kong's ethnic Chinese residents to travel to China as "compatriots" rather than foreigners.

The delegation was told to remain on the plane while the other passengers disembarked. "We are in a state of shock",

They were then sent straight back to Hong Kong without being allowed to talk to anyone or deliver their petition.

China's response came as no surprise. At least three original members of the delegation were denied permission to travel to China and the authorities made it clear they would not receive the petition. This was a rare attempt by Hong Kong's democrats to make direct contact with Chinese officials in Peking.

"We are in a state of shock",

said John Tse, a legislator, on returning from Peking. He said the Chinese authorities had boarded the plane carrying a three-page blacklist which contained their names.

Reports of a blacklist have often surfaced. A number of prominent activists, publishers and others have been told not to apply for permission to visit China because it would be turned down. One of those who was denied a visit to his family in China said yesterday:

"The message is clear. They want me to get out of Hong Kong; they're saying I have to watch it after 1997".

The delegation returned to Hong Kong last night saying they had seen "the true face" of China's promise to respect the territory's autonomy and freedoms following next year's return to Chinese sovereignty.

In Tiananmen Square, at the centre of Peking, the scene of the notorious massacre of democracy protesters in 1989. He said that people in Hong Kong would not be concerned

Martin Lee, the leader of the Democratic Party, whose members were prominent in the delegation, said: "I'm compelled to conclude that Chinese leaders are not prepared to hear anything from Hong Kong that they don't want to hear".

However Allen Lee, a conservative legislator who acts as an adviser to China, described the events in Peking as nothing more than a "publicity stunt". He said that people in Hong Kong would not be concerned

about the way the Chinese authorities had handled the matter because it was a deliberate provocation.

Zhang Junsheng, the chief spokesman for China in Hong Kong, said the Chinese government had "the right to protect national security". He said the delegation had "already been told that they would have to face the consequences of their actions" but had insisted on "putting on a show". "This will not be tolerated", he said.

## Communists waste no time on ideals

STEPHEN VINES

Hong Kong

It would be surprising if more than one of China's 57 million Communist Party members spent yesterday, the 75th anniversary of the party's foundation, sparing a thought for the Communist Manifesto, a document first translated into Chinese in 1921, two years before the Chinese Communist Party was established. "Spot the Marxist" is a favourite (if not very productive) sport among China-watchers.

The world's largest and most powerful Communist Party has never had too much time for ideology. If anything it has always been more nationalist than communist.

Yesterday, the party - which seized power in 1949 after almost three decades of bitter struggle - issued a clarion call not for the realisation of Marxist ideals but for the people to fight corruption, a cancer which even the party admits is eating at its very heart.

Few of the Communist old guard remain, yet those who do, notably the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, wield tremendous influence. The next generation, personified by President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng, are more in the mould of Soviet-educated bureaucrats who have no experience of the struggles which almost exhaust-

ed their revolutionary predecessors. Their main concern is to maintain the party's power.

At a rare news conference a few years ago Mr Li was asked when he had last opened a book by Karl Marx. The usually impulsive premier was visibly taken aback. It took some time before he finally spluttered out a response to the effect that Marx was an important thinker.

Membership of the party these days is sought more for career progression and access to privilege than for any ideological motive. The ideological convulsions, such as the disastrous "Great Leap Forward" of the Fifties which killed millions of people, and the Sixties' Cultural Revolution, which was both murderous and intensely damaging to China's social development, are admitted as being mistakes.

Reports from Peking now speak of pressure for the Communist leadership to reassess its actions during the bloody Tiananmen Square uprising of 1989. But there is no public sign that such a reassessment will be made in the near future.

Having allowed communism to mean more or less whatever the Chinese leadership has decided it should mean, the clique which runs the Communist Party hopes that its pragmatism and flexibility will enable the party to flourish for at least another 75 years.



Communist headquarters, Yenan 1930s: From left, Mao Tse-tung, journalist Earl Leaf, Chu Teh, Madame Mao Tse-tung

Photograph: Corbis-Bettman

## Vietnam puts dead man on to politburo

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

Hanoi

In more ways than one, the Vietnamese Communist Party congress, which formally closed yesterday afternoon, was a deathly business. For seven hours at a time, for four days, 1,045 elderly men (and 153 women) sat in a concrete hall listening to speeches about the future of international Communism. Across the road from this metaphorical mausoleum was a real one - the last resting place of Ho Chi Minh, Communist Vietnam's founding father, whose embalmed body still lies in state.

To top off the symbolism, the party yesterday announced the election to its politburo of Nguyen Dinh Tu, the 63-year-old chief of the atomic energy commission. Even by the standards of Vietnamese politics, Comrade Nguyen will be an inert and low-profile cadre; last Friday, on the opening day of the congress, he died of a heart attack.

For all this, the eighth congress was not the airless assembly of ageing dinosaurs

which one might have expected. It demonstrated above all that five years after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, Communism may not be healthy, but it is certainly not dead. In Vietnam, even by the standards of the capitalist West, it is doing very well for itself.

Like any party conference, the congress was much concerned with giving itself a pat on the back. The political report, rubber-stamped by the delegates over the weekend, dwelled much on the indisputable successes of the past 10 years. In 1986, when Vietnam embarked on its policy of *doi moi*, or reform, inflation was 70 per cent. At the last party congress in 1991, it was 67 per cent; this year the figure is down to a fifth of that. Capital investment is increasing, and growth is running at more than 8 per cent.

But the striking thing about the policy report is the amount of self criticism it contains. Parts of its express the moderate anxieties of left-leaning parties everywhere: rising unemployment, environmental damage, and the "social evils"

of crime, drug addiction and pornography. But other sections read less like the work of revolutionary Communists, than that of a team of management consultants.

Vietnam "remains the among the poorest countries in the world, with low levels of economic development, labour productivity, and business efficiency". Despite the need for investment "state and party institutions ... are spending wastefully, consuming more than they can produce without saving for intensive development". The solution to this is expressed in a curiously hybrid jargon, "to build a multi-sector commodity economy operating along the market mechanism as well as state management along the socialist line".

In practice this means more capitalism: promoting technology, commerce and foreign investment - even, some time in the next century, founding a stock market. But it also means socialism: defending the homeland, strengthening the party and a stern rejection of "fanatic democracy" and multi-party politics.

shoulders but we are happy that the task is on us," Gonchigdorj added. "We have made a contract with the people and now we will implement that contract."

The defeated MPRP refused to make a formal comment.

"This is the choice of the nation," an MPRP official who declined to be identified said. "I would like to congratulate our young people, but they have to keep their promises."

Analysts said the polls appeared to be free and fair, with much of the voting split along age lines. Older voters opted for the MPRP, while the younger favoured the opposition, which campaigned for faster economic liberalisation and political reform.

"This means for the coalition and for us that for the first time ... in the contemporary history of Mongolia, we are democratic," said the SDP's party chief, Gonchigdorj.

"I don't think anyone considered they would actually win, including themselves," said

a Western diplomat. "It's a total surprise."

Coalition officials said the immediate task was to form a government and tackle economic and social problems that have racked the country of 2.3 million people, many of whom are nomadic cattle- and sheep-herders, in its transition from Soviet-style planning to a free market democracy. The democrats faced a tough job, officials said.

"Of course, first I'm happy, but second I'm a little scared about what we have to do," said one victorious opposition candidate. "We have a big responsibility."

Gonchigdorj declined to comment on whom the coalition would nominate for the post of prime minister. But he said he was a likely candidate to become speaker of parliament.

## Mongolia topples the old rulers

Ulan Bator (Reuters) - Mongolia's opposition Democratic Union Coalition stormed to a landslide victory in parliamentary elections yesterday, toppling the ex-Communists who have ruled the vast land of steppes for 75 years.

The democrats swept more than double the seats won by the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, capturing 48 of 76 seats in the Great Hural, or parliament, up from just six in 1992. The scale of victory surprised the opposition itself.

"This was a very important election," said Enkhsaikhan, the head of the opposition coalition. "We are seeing the sights of the Mongolian people into the next century."

Sunday's polls were the second for the Great Hural under a post-Communist constitution which was adopted in 1992

after democratic protests ended Communist rule in 1990.

The opposition coalition won 48 seats. Non-party candidates running under the coalition's banner won three seats. The former Communist MPRP saw its 70-seat majority sliced to a total of only 23 seats. Results of the final five seats had yet to be tallied.

A cheering crowd of hundreds - dancing, hugging each other and weeping for joy at the surprise victory - greeted victorious coalition officials at their headquarters after the election committee announced the initial results.

"This means for the coalition and for us that for the first time ... in the contemporary history of Mongolia, we are democratic," said the SDP's party chief, Gonchigdorj.

"I don't think anyone considered they would actually win, including themselves," said

shoulders but we are happy that the task is on us," Gonchigdorj added. "We have made a contract with the people and now we will implement that contract."

The defeated MPRP refused to make a formal comment.

"This is the choice of the nation," an MPRP official who declined to be identified said. "I would like to congratulate our young people, but they have to keep their promises."

Analysts said the polls appeared to be free and fair, with much of the voting split along age lines. Older voters opted for the MPRP, while the younger favoured the opposition, which campaigned for faster economic liberalisation and political reform.

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# Mr Blair and the smack of firm moderation

The word the pundits seized on in the studios yesterday was "autocrat" – the coinage of the dissident Labour MP Paul Flynn. Dissident! These latest acts of leadership by Tony Blair – ie, unilateral assertions of party policy – have resurrected old phraseology. We are hearing of democratic centralism, party lines, loyalty tests. It's enough to make you think the Labour Party is more like the Communist Party of the Soviet Union than a ramshackle voluntary organisation that in most parts of the country still sets its quorums for meetings in handfuls. Just imagine the next bulletin from within the Islington presidium. Like Kremlin watchers of old we need to attend the small details. Why was Comrade Prescott so quickly on the phones last week spreading the word of Kim II Blair's great success in the northern regions?

What Mr Blair is up to needs to be placed in the context of a party in historical disequilibrium. The butterfly is not yet out of its chrysalis: the only thing we know is that it is not going to be a red admiral. A socialist mass-membership party has not yet transformed into – what? Constitutionally, the Labour Party that gave us a donkey-jacketed lover of Hazlitt to carry its standard against Margaret Thatcher no longer exists. Neil Kinnock's agony began with remastering the party machine. Yet much of the old formation remains, notably in members' beliefs about what it is they

belong to. Audible in the past few days, especially from Cardiff and Edinburgh, has been the doctrine that Labour has an essence, impervious to change and modernity. And the immutability of This Great Movement of Ours, Blair's critics seem to say, lies in its arcane internal processes for consultation and decision-making. Political change is only accomplished annually when the tribes gather for the conference.

Behind that lies a very particular – and particularly anachronistic – conception of what a political party is. For them, a party is something owned by activists, card-holders, an elect who in turn own its policies and its representation. It is, surely, that conception which Tony Blair is tilting at. For what he is doing now goes beyond persuading the party to change its mind about the Great Shambles, Clause IV. The Blair project now encompasses remaking the Labour Party's idea of itself.

But why does that ambition require turning Labour into a disciplinary machine of which Stalin would be proud? Surely it is because Mr Blair's object must eventually be to diminish the significance of party itself. That end was certainly accomplished last week when devolution of power to Scotland and Wales was sprung on unwitting party cadres.

Judging the riskiness of Mr Blair's bid would be easier if he could be pinned down by analogy. Blair is no Lloyd



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George; he is neither a party breaker, nor a party maker. Blair's leadership consists in reaching outside his party to try to touch bases, stroke sentiments in the population at large while turning his party's face outwards and diminishing its pretensions. He has admitted his admiration for Lady Thatcher and a style of leadership – exemplified also by Ted Heath at the height of his powers – which takes the institutions of party governance entirely for granted. Every season the commentators hope against hope that the Tory Party rank and file will rise up; they never do. The English appear to want to see parties led. They

like vicariously to hear the thwack of leather on trousers – at least its political equivalent – without losing anything of their democratic birthright. Tony Blair's autocracy-for-the-sake-of-moderation plays successfully to the gallery of public opinion.

But if the office of the Labour leader has become, to adopt the American phrase, a bully pulpit giving him direct access to the public, what becomes of party? What will Labour look like when it is remade in the Blair image? One option is canvassed above: it starts to look more and more like the Conservative Party, an old pals' act which does not

own its manifesto or its ministers. New Labour might find more attractive the North American model of party. The Democrats have committees and hierarchies but it is money contributed from the public that makes them tick. Democrats do not own the policy voted by members of Congress or the President. He makes policy in a backroom of the White House while, if Bob Woodward is to be believed, manipulating millions in Democratic National Committee funds. The American trick is to ensure that the asset of the Democrats to its "platform" represents in a rough and ready way a slice of US public opinion.

Isn't that what Tony Blair wants for Labour: that party asset should stand for the agreement of most of the population? In the here and now, most of the time the notion of party is a drag-anchor tugging at his ambitions. If Tony Blair gets to lead a government, he will depend for support on MPs selected by constituency activists, many of whom are only barely emancipated from the ideologies and aspirations of Labour's past. Yet Mr Blair is fast imprisoning them in a manifesto of his making.

It would be premature to pronounce the death of party activism. But political parties in Britain are still essentially, creations of an only marginally altered 19th-century idea. In origin, they reflected the electors' division of broad ideas. Now they do no such thing: they reflect the of activist minorities. If British

politics is to be revived, the idea of parties and what they are for has to be reinvented. In Mr Blair's case, that means "autocratic" leadership is necessary, but only so long as it advances the idea of a party closer to a wider swathe of Britons. So far as the Tories are concerned, of course, the notion of what their party is for may require an even more fundamental revision, once the Euro-opposition banner is finally and fully unfurled.

## Zimmerframin' all over the world

Listen to the baby-boomers wailing. Status Quo are upset because Radio 1 won't play their records. Fifty-year-old middle managers are distressed because employers won't give them jobs. Age discrimination, that's what it is. Radio 1 has an excuse: Status Quo are just plain boring. Employers don't get off so lightly: one in four men in their late fifties will never return to work, which clearly creates a problem. Instead of sliding miserably into old age, men should embrace a more interesting (ie, not working) life. And they could learn from the Somme veterans, who endured an age in a single day, and have lived it ever since. The fact that the rest of us are leading long and fruitful lives is, in some measure, thanks to them. Let's enjoy it.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Scotland needs a new-style parliament

Sir: If we are putting Scotland's future to the touch ("Blair set for poll on political reform", 26 June), let us up the stakes a little and begin that process by getting rid of the whole concept of "devolution", which, in the context of Scotland's history, is an irrelevant cul-de-sac, and a dangerous one too.

Nothing could be more alien to the spirit of partnership and of continuing independence which infused the Act of Union, than the superior-subordinate relationship that is inherent in devolution.

The historian F.W. Maitland (himself of Scottish descent) described Anglo-Scottish relations since the Act of Union until the end of the 19th century in terms of a dynamic rhythm, whereby, to their mutual enrichment, two kingdoms drew ever closer together, politically and economically, while socially and culturally, two peoples drew ever further apart.

This dynamically interactive relationship was replaced, in the present century, by the concept of a unitary British state, with Scotland being reduced in status to a mere region or province of England. In this way an either-or relationship became (temporarily, one must hope) a mechanistic, either-or relationship, with unionism at one end of the spectrum, nationalism at the other, and in the middle a somewhat unstable compromise in the form of devolution.

What we need is an integrated solution. This means picking up the threads of the 1707 Act and institutionalising Scotland's continuing independence by setting up a parliament in Edinburgh which works in partnership with a separate UK parliament at Westminster.

We have an opportunity to create, here in Scotland, "bottom-up", the first genuinely democratic parliament in the world, with economic hierarchy and the rule of law (characteristic Westminster preoccupations) being overtaken by democratic-humanist concerns. Not maximum economic growth but maximum social well-being is the key to the future, as self-preservation becomes less important than the preservation of the self". Could this innovative, new-style Parliament actually become the tail that wags the tired old Westminster dog?

T. DRUMMOND HUNTER  
Chairman  
Scottish Institute  
of Human Relations  
Edinburgh

Sir: Tony Blair's imposition of a referendum on his Scottish party was more indicative of new Labour than the issue of the referendum itself. It was the way it was done that caused the real damage. The Blair magic is less well received here than among the Islington policy makers, principle still playing an important role in Scottish politics.

Too often, legitimate aims and aspirations are met by the constitutional dialogue of the deaf: "we know what you want, we know what is good for you". Many of us suspect that even the very mild form of self-government proposed by the Constitutional Convention is going to be ditched by new Labour on the altar of southern votes.

STEVE WILLIAMS  
Aberdeen



### Stop the spread of superstores

Sir: You rightly comment ("Supermarkets are sucking the high street dry", 28 June) that future generations will curse us for allowing the spread of superstores. But in spite of the harm that has already been done, some important damage limitation is still possible.

Although it is unlikely that the Department of the Environment would now grant planning permission for a superstore, there are some 400 permissions, granted in less enlightened days, still to be taken up. John Gummer or, if necessary, Parliament should admit the mistake and revoke these consents. Compensation will have to be negotiated, but it would be better to pay out than to allow further lasting damage.

STEPHEN PLOWDEN  
London NW1

Sir: Friday's business comment (28 June) was let down by its concluding paragraph. The claim that improved car parking in town centres will attract trade from out-of-town centres must be questioned. Many people have deserted our town centres because of the problems that cars create: air pollution, noise, a threat to safety, to name but three.

ANDY BRABIN  
London SW11

### Holidays mean healthy workers

Sir: Hamish McRae argues that holiday entitlement for UK employees should be reduced ("Can we afford holidays?", 28 June), but three simple facts are worth noting.

First, stress-related illnesses (primarily due to overwork) currently cost the UK economy between £7bn and £12bn a year. Secondly, it is not the hours that people put into their work which matters but what they put into those hours. Thirdly, he cites the example of Japan as a possible example for the UK to emulate. In fact, there are signs of a growing backlash against the whole culture of workaholism in Japan (particularly amongst the under-thirties) and growing concerns about job burnout and "karoshi" ("death by overwork").

Dr NICK FORSTER  
Cardiff Business School

### Keeping secrets at Westminster

Sir: Anthony Bevins's article on "A day in the death of the Commons" (28 June) was, sadly, all too accurate.

When I wrote a humorous column in the *House* magazine on 27 May 1991 in which I suggested that "about 85 per cent of a backbench MP's work is useless, and 50 per cent may be harmful", a national journalist picked it up and it received a lot of attention.

The sad fact was that I had said exactly the same thing in a speech on the floor of the House of Commons several months earlier, and no one took the slightest notice. Just as a rumour at Westminster is a secret you share with two MPs, so the best way to keep a secret is to make a speech about it in the Chamber.

If MPs really wanted to put the head of Government under effective pressure, they would set up a Select Committee on the Cabinet Office, before which the Prime Minister would appear three times a year, and which would range in questioning across the whole field of Government policy.

Its reports would be published every four months, and would always involve a debate (and vote) in the Chamber. The committee would be chosen from the toughest questioners in the House, and chaired by an Opposition MP (like the Parliamentary Affairs Committee). It would work too well, so it will not happen.

Sir MICHAEL LATHAM  
London SW7

### The price of a plumber

Sir: So for plumbers, "only the time on the customer's premises [is] chargeable" (letter, 1 July). Around here, plumbers and washing-machine repair men charge a £30-40 call-out fee. At the two-to-three job per day quoted by Lois Wakeman, this "reality" sounds better than marking exam scripts, in spite of all the other benefits enjoyed by teachers in their well-paid, well-resourced, high status profession.

ROLAND MILES  
Redhill, Surrey

### I beat Angela

Sir: Angela Rippon was not the BBC's first female newsreader ("Landmarks in the Battle", 24 June). This is a common error. I was the first in this much-disputed position, in 1960.

NAN WINTON  
Bridport, Dorset

### Genes don't make us what we are

Sir: The *Independent's* science writing is usually outstanding, so it is especially disappointing to come across a report ("Brainy sons owe intelligence to their mothers", 28 June) so riddled with bad science and illogical argument, and showing no awareness that genetic determinism should be treated with care.

There is no evidence that any gene or genes determine rather than influence human characteristics. There is quite a lot of evidence that the interactions between genes, environment, culture, and personal choice are

Opinion of doing.

Of course he is right that disengaging from means-tested assistance is the essential route to real reform, but hardly advocates it.

### Radical route to welfare reform

Sir: "The hour demands the most radical reconstruction" of the Welfare State, writes Frank Field ("How to open the benefit trap", 1 July) And yet one is constantly surprised how far from radical his proposals. They would do little more than tinker with the existing system, which is what he accuses the Government and the Opposition of doing.

Of course he is right that disengaging from means-tested assistance is the essential route to real reform, but hardly advocates it.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.  
(Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

### National Gallery open all hours

Sir: There is good news from the National Gallery for your correspondent VV Hope-Scott (letter, 26 June). Already open free of charge seven days a week, the National Gallery is now open from noon every Sunday and until 8pm every Wednesday. We hope that VV Hope-Scott and many others will make regular evening visits.

NEIL MacGREGOR  
Director  
The National Gallery  
London WC2

### Commemorating the Somme

Sir: The absence of John Major and Michael Portillo from the ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme (report, 1 July) reminds me of the 1960s peace slogan.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.  
(Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

## analysis



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# In Boris Yeltsin's shadow – the men waiting to rule Russia

By Phil Reeves

**A** few days ago, the new poster that is now festooned across the billboards of Moscow would have seemed perfectly reasonable. It shows a smiling Boris Yeltsin, holding his arms up like a body-builder, inviting someone to feel his muscles. Now it seems laughable, even pitiful.

Russians will go to the polls tomorrow to decide whether Mr Yeltsin will go on being president, or whether to offer power on the bulldog shoulders of Gennady Zyuganov, the leader of a Communist-nationalist bloc. After the events of the last few days, the choice will surely seem more than ever before.

When they voted in the election's first round on 16 June, many of the 26 million who put a cross against Mr Yeltsin's name would have believed he was a rejuvenated man. This was the reason they were willing to entrust their grave reservations

about his blundered handling of the Chechen war, a broken-down economy, and the social ills that have come hand-in-hand with the arrival of the free market.

Their 65-year-old president seemed to have bounced back like an India rubber ball, apparently having overcome both last year's heart trouble and his love of liquor. As the campaign unfolded, they watched him on state-controlled television touring the length and breadth of the nation.

On one day, he was down an Arctic coal mine; on another, he was dancing at a rock concert in the Urals; on a third, he was arguing enthusiastically with a gaggle of old women in the street. For all his many shortcomings, lack of energy and determination did not seem to be among them.

Thanks to this new lease of life, plus a well funded and professional campaign team, Mr Zyuganov has been having a

– the contest is much altered. Yesterday, after four days of mysterious seclusion, Mr Yeltsin appeared on television, looking weary, pale and very wooden, to appeal to Russians to vote for a "normal life".

His younger rival, Mr Zyuganov, has been having a

field day, demanding a medical commission to investigate the president's health, calling for a coalition government, and suggesting that Yeltsin is unfit to govern. An otherwise dull performer, the Communist leader has a new assurance about him these days, as he trots out his lines before the cameras in a near-monotone. (He has even borrowed his opponent's tactics, inviting journalists to watch him play volleyball, and dancing at a nightclub).

You could understand the concern of the president's henchmen – who include his daughter, Tatjana – to get him on the air. In the last week, Mr Yeltsin has cancelled three campaign visits because of what his aides described as a sore throat. We do not know what his true condition is, but it seems certain to involve more than his vocal cords (which seemed to work during yesterday's television address). Although his health problems have been played down, or even ignored, by much of the Russian media, word has still got out – especially through the pages of the Communist-dominated press in the regions. On the eve of the most important election in the country's history, Russians needed to be shown that their president was still alive, if not particularly well.

On Sunday, he was supposed to stage his grand finale, an appearance at Moscow's Luzhniki stadium before thousands of cheering young people, lured there by the promise of rock bands and beer. He did not appear in person. That privilege was left to his puppet from a satirical television programme

called *Kukly*, Russia's equivalent of *Spitting Image*.

It was an unfortunate choice of stand-in. For, as Russians prepare to vote, the election is dominated by serious doubts over whether Mr Yeltsin could turn out to be little more than a puppet, an ill old man manipulated by a coterie of ambitious insiders hungry for his job.

The stagnation of the latter years of Leonid Brezhnev's regime still lurks in the collective memory. Could Boris Yeltsin be heading for the same fate, and – if so – who would run the place?

The question mark over his health revises an issue that has been hanging in the air ever since Russia's constitution passed into law by referendum in 1993, in a vote that is now known to have been rigged. Mr Yeltsin's post became the most powerful elected office in the world, allowing him to rule by presidential decree, without paying much heed to the weak, now Communist-dominated, parliament. With so much power concentrated in one man's hands, the system depends on an active president – and not an ailing one.

When Mr Yeltsin had his first bout of heart trouble last July, it was widely believed in the West that his successor would be Viktor Chernomyrdin, Russia's prime minister. The former head of the state-run gas giant, Gazprom, was riding high in public opinion after successfully intervening in a crisis in the southern Russian town of Budyonnovsk, where Chechen rebels had taken more than 1,000 people hostage. But

after piloting the government's political party, "Our Home Is Russia", to a poor performance in December's parliamentary election, Mr Chernomyrdin's star has waned. Few now see him as a likely heir, let alone the favourite.

For now, that slot is filled by

If Yeltsin is hidden in a sanatorium, General Lebed clearly aims to rule the roost

the erect military frame of Alexander Lebed, the former two-star paratrooper general on whom the president has lavished power and glory. Two weeks ago, Mr Yeltsin appointed him secretary of the Security Council and his national security adviser in the hope of wooing the 11 million voters he attracted in the first round.

At first, it seemed a smart move, not least because the general's arrival in the Kremlin precipitated the firing of four unpopular hawks, none of whom are known for their love of democracy – including his arch-enemy, the Defence Minister, General Pavel Grachev, and the head of the powerful Federal Security Service, General Mikhail Bursukov. Since then, however, Mr Lebed's contribution has been far more questionable.

He has, for example, given

some intriguing hints about how he sees his future role. He has announced that he wishes to be vice-president (although this would involve a change in the constitution that, by law, should be ratified by both parliamentary chambers and two-thirds of the 89 regions).

He has also declared that he wants sweeping new powers for the Security Council, giving it oversight over the military and security services, and allowing it to carry out his mission of imposing law and order over a fledgling society that is riddled with corruption and organised crime.

If Mr Yeltsin is fit and active, Mr Lebed's powers – if he gets his way – would indeed be great. But if the president is closeted in a country sanatorium, surrounded by cardinals, the general clearly aims to rule the roost.

His recent erratic behaviour (not least, calling Mormons "scum" and whipping up fears of a coup) has sent a shiver of alarm through Western governments. They know he just might end up being in charge of the largest country in the world, with a huge nuclear arsenal, a disaffected army, feuding security services, and uncertain legal and democratic structures.

But Mr Lebed may not survive for long. His behaviour has shown him to be politically naive, and unwise. Although popular in the army's lower ranks, he has plenty of strong enemies in the Kremlin, who know how to plant a knife in the back – and will not hesitate to do so. Once the election is over, Mr Yeltsin may also wonder if

he has any further need of him. If he goes, others will step forward in search of power. Mr Yeltsin's close confidant, General Alexander Korzhakov, whom he sacked a fortnight ago as the head of the presidential guard, is still working in the Kremlin in an unclear role.

Another close ally, the mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, who was elected last month with an overwhelming majority, is rumoured to be seeking high position. And other heavyweights lurk in the wings, from ministers – the Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, the Interior Minister, Anatoly Kuklin – to liberal advisers, notably the former privatisation minister, Anatoly Chubais, and the president's top campaign co-ordinator, Sergei Filatov.

If Mr Yeltsin is re-elected, the future is unlikely to be an easy one. Russian politics is about personalities. In the last three months, Mr Yeltsin's campaign team proved that they could overcome his deep unpopularity – by whipping up a soufflé of support, aided by the master-chefs of the Russian national media.

But, unfortunately, the choice of people is not inspiring.

Tomorrow Russia will decide between a president with poor health, backed by a power-hungry general, and Gennady Zyuganov, an unknown apparatchik whose senior aides include some Soviet-era dinosaurs and a disturbing element of hardline nationalists. Russians have yet to get the politicians they deserve.

## Dogs' dinners and things the cat dragged in

**D**on't upset the apple cart. All the apples will roll on the road.

They would take ages to pick up again and half of them would be spoilt. Nasty. But until you've actually seen an apple cart roll over and disgorge its load, you can't understand how disastrous it might be.

Because ... I said, and stopped.

Don't forget, he's never seen an apple cart, whether upset or not," said my wife.

"Nor have I," said I. "None of us has," she said. We looked at each other.

It was clearly time for another visit to the Idiom Heritage Museum.

This is one of our favourite days out in the West Country.

It is such a simple idea for a theme park and yet such fun.

The concept, basically, is to have working demonstration models of the origins of all the phrases in our language that have a rural, agricultural and early industrial background but whose origins have vanished while the phrase remains.

Like an apple cart.

We don't have apple carts any more, but you can sort of guess why it must be bad to

upset an apple cart. All the apples would roll on the road.

They would take ages to pick up again and half of them would be spoilt. Nasty. But until you've actually seen an apple cart roll over and disgorge its load, you can't understand how disastrous it might be.

Well spotted!" he said.

"The reason is, of course, that a vast amount of our idioms were invented in the pre-car

age, when the horse was king,

and so it was the natural cur

rency for imagery. Putting the

cart before the horse, a horse

of different colour, a dark

horse – you don't get this sort

of imagery from cars, even

now, do you? A car of a dif

ferent colour? You can take a

car to a garage, but you can't

make it take on petrol? I don't

think so, somehow. I don't

think it would work."

"No, I think you're ... I

said, but he was already on to the next display, which was two huge lumps of something white.

"Can you tell the difference?" he said.

"Is there a difference?" I said.

"One's chalk, one's cheese," he said – pretty smugly, I thought. "Pretty damned similar, aren't they? People are amazed how similar."

"Depends on the cheese," I said. "You've got a hard white cheese here, but if we had Brie ..."

"He wasn't listening. He was already on to the next thing."

"If your child is easily shocked or squeamish, I wouldn't let him look into the next shed of exhibits," he said.

"He was right. I felt a bit queasy myself. There was one nasty pile that was a dog's dinner, another something that the cat had dragged in, a cooking vessel smelling evil which was a kettle of fish, a drowned rat, a dead dormouse, a drunk skunk ..."

"Have you got a bird in the hand?" I said, in an attempt to lighten things.

"No, I think you're ... I

said. "That's a proverb," he said. "No proverbs here. Only idioms."

"Idioms tell you more about history than proverbs do."

"Dog's dinner" tells you about a time when dogs' dinners didn't come out of tins called Woof or Pettico, but were real rotten scraps."

We passed the bandwagon and the gravy train.

We saw the demonstration of the cat being put among the pigeons.

We passed a refreshment stall.

"How are they selling?" called Mr Holinshed.

"Very well indeed," a lady called back.

"Hot cakes," he explained to me.

We finally got out of the Idiom Heritage Museum and drove home. I was so glad to get away that I must have been driving too fast, as my wife asked me to slow down.

"You're driving like the clappers," she said.

"What are clappers?" asked my son.

I thought about it for a moment.

"Shut up," I told him.

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## the commentators

# This is a government health warning

Tories admit that new Labour has new policies, but claim they will be just as damaging as the old ones

The Cabinet yesterday abolished the past by settling on the slogan "New Labour, New Danger". At its political meeting yesterday, it finally buried the option of arguing that Tony Blair has not really changed the party at all.

This was a watershed. Do not now expect party political broadcasts to be filled with grainy black-and-white film of uncollected and rat-infested dustbins during the 1978-79 winter of discontent. That saga began before the new crop of 18-year-olds who will be on the electoral register by May 1997 was even born.

To all that, the Conservatives yesterday said a regretful, but unmistakable farewell. They will henceforth spend their newly and mysteriously acquired millions on seeking to persuade electors that Mr Blair has indeed changed his party, but not into the harmless imitation of Toryism that, for the past few days, the Labour leader's backbench critics have been claiming it has become.

Instead, the message for which Conservative Central Office and its PR troika of Maurice Saatchi, Sir Tim Bell and Peter Gunnar secured endorsement yesterday is that Labour poses the country a new threat for new times.

This is a stunning acknowledgement

of Mr Blair's dominance – so far – of the electoral landscape. It accepts that the new cannot now be detached from new Labour. The focus groups of now disaffected voters – who were Tory in 1992, and in whom both the main parties have been obsessively interested for many months – now apparently use the term "new Labour" without self-consciousness. It also draws conclusions, unpalatable for many Tory activists, from Mr Blair's triumphant rewriting of Clause IV and the long list of subsequent policy revisions that culminated in last week's unfurling mine-clearing operation over Scottish and Welsh devolution.

The analysis that Mr Blair is different but the party remains the same just won't run. If it were right, Mr Blair would now be confronting some rather more menacing public opponents than the backbencher Paul Flynn. And he would not be planning to put Thursday's revisionist *Road to the Manifesto* document to a ballot of the party's full membership with almost total confidence.

Ministers were reluctantly forced to accept all this yesterday, implicitly admitting that it had taken them two years to agree on how to attack Mr Blair.

Nevertheless, Labour would be foolish to ignore the approach agreed



DONALD MACINTYRE

## 'New Labour', the mantra will go, 'new interventionism'

yesterday. Just as the notion of Britain as an Enterprise Centre for Europe sought to bring some order to the confusions of post-Thatcherite Conservatism, so the new anti-Labour strategy will be to try and map out an internally coherent set of answers to the daunting question of how to make Blairism threatening.

The constitution is one example cited with enthusiasm at Central Office. Hard as it is, Tories will try to demonise Charter 88 as the Nineties equivalent of CND. By depicting the Labour leadership as fellow travellers

to a metropolitan clique of root-and-branch constitutional reformers, the summer campaign will seek to fix the prospect of a Blair premiership as one that would preside over what has already been labelled for internal Tory purposes "the last British Government".

The Tories, for example, are preparing to argue that a Bill of Rights will empower the unelected judges at the expense of a democratic Westminster. And through a combination of Labour's devolution plans and the Blair promise not to be isolated in Europe, the Tory tactic will be to try and make stick the charge that Blair is undermining the very unity of Britain that he claims a mandate to strengthen.

Another is the economy. No longer running the fantastic claim that Blair intends to deliver the country back to the union barons, the Tories will instead argue that the national minimum wage, Labour's espousal of the Social Chapter, and the still-cloudy notion of a stakeholder economy are designed to arrest and temper the global process of change which the Tories will argue they alone are capable of embracing. The argument that a minimum wage relieves the taxpayer of subsidising unscrupulous employers though the social security system will

be turned on its head. Instead, the minimum wage will be subsumed as the new threat to inward investment, jobs and competitiveness. "New Labour," the mantra will go down the ranks, "new interventionism".

So also with tax and spend. In fact acknowledgement of Blair's ruthless success in applying the golden rule of not spending more than you can save, Tory researchers are now concentrating on what Labour has not yet explicitly ruled out – such as dozens of spending pledges in earlier policy documents which they believe Blair cannot disown without further internal tremors.

What's more, ministers are considering an explicit promise not to raise standard rate income tax in the next Parliament and then challenging Labour to match it.

A lot of this is unedifying, or not yet convincing, or both. To begin to work, it needs a subtlety that utterly failed to inform Stephen Dorrell's far-fetched hint yesterday that constitutional reform could even threaten 250 years of civil peace. But the Tories have at least settled on an anti-Blair strategy to road-test until the party conference. If nothing else, it is a reminder for Labour of the fire-proofing that it has still to put in place. It's going to be a long hot summer.

# Why business should pay for the arts

Colin Tweedy tells Helen Hague that élitism has had its day

Tomorrow evening at Shakespeare's Globe in London, corporate executives and arts luminaries will be sipping champagne and nibbling canapés while they wait to see which businesses have picked up awards for sponsoring the arts. It will be a glitzy affair, with Dame Diana Rigg presenting the trophies and Stephen Fry and Sheena McDonald introducing the winners. Steel bands and the Ballet Rambert are among the acts billed to help the party – thrown by the *Financial Times* and the Association of Business Sponsorship of the Arts (Absa) – to celebrate the crucial link between those who sign the cheques and those who bring the arts to the public.

With business sponsorship up 19 per cent last year, to £82.8m, things look buoyant. But Absa, which has staged the awards for the past 18 years, is far from blasé about the future of sponsorship.

As public subsidy is cut back, sponsorship funding is no longer just the icing on the cake. Virginia Bottomley has sliced 10 per cent off the budget that gives arts organisations matching money if they can find business sponsors to stump up cash. And a further 10 per cent cut has been heralded for next year.

But Colin Tweedy, director-general of Absa, is keen to counter a deeper malaise: business leaders are not as interested in junketing at Glyndebourne as were their predecessors. More worrying still, they "tend to glaze over" when he tries to explain that a canny sponsorship can boost the corporate profile.

Tweedy believes that cultural consumption is under threat among decision-makers and highly pressured, time-strapped high earners. "People are saying: 'I've got to make my pile while I'm young because I might be made redundant at 40 or 50.' If people increasingly consume culture through CDs, videos and the Internet, they will lose the taste for live performance and exhibitions." Audiences are dropping in America and in London, he says.

Tweedy has started a review of how Absa – which has 300 business members – functions. He sees a new role emerging as an arts advocacy agency. "We can't just promote business sponsorship. We have to promote the value of the arts to society at the same time."

Absa is working on projects that are aimed, says Tweedy, at "moving the arts out of the

crush bar" – through getting artists, dancers and performers to visit the workplace. It plans arts-at-work pilous in Belfast, Birmingham and London. According to Tweedy, "The very phrase 'the arts' is perceived as élitist. More and more businesses say to me I don't want to be seen to be with élitist art. The new direction we hope to take is about trying to show people that the arts are about the creativity of our country, from the design of a poster or a book cover to live performances and the architecture around us.

"We are trying to give people a vocabulary to talk about the arts, to enable them to discover what the arts have to offer. Most people are comfortable talking about football but not about theatre."

Tweedy is asking leading businesses to donate £20,000 each for three years to help

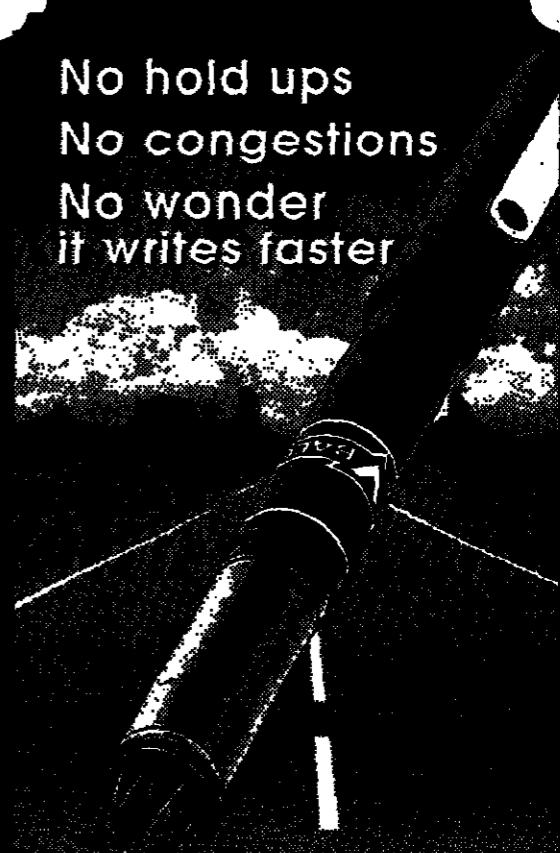
**Businesses tell me that they don't want to be seen with élitist art'**

reposition Absa in its drive to open up access to more citizens. "Sponsorship is still buoyant but we've got to be ahead of the game. We've got to promote models and mechanisms to excite people about the arts. We've got to get people out of the work environment, or the gym, or off the sofa, and into the performance and the exhibition space. We've got to show people that the arts are more than an opera house, though the opera house is still important. This means taking opera to schools and getting teenagers to recognise the value of contemporary dance and exhibitions. It's that whole widening of culture which is something that the French have always understood as helping to mark what makes a nation."

As he readies himself for tomorrow's ceremony, Colin Tweedy has more on his plate than a canapé or two to be washed down with champagne. He has been seized by a new zeal to widen audiences to the arts. "I believe the arts actually make people better. And they certainly don't encourage them to riot in Trafalgar Square."

Quoting Jo Brand, the comedian, he adds, "Without the arts, we are merely monkeys with car keys."

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**Risks are part of life. Resorting to law will not make them disappear, says Paul Vallely**

**C**yril Smith did not die on time. He is therefore suing the doctors who, three years ago, told him he had three months to live. He wants compensation for the lack of earnings incurred when, on their advice, aged 59, he gave up his job as a painter and decorator. The doctors say their diagnosis was as accurate as possible at the time and that the ingrate should be pleased that he responded so well to the chemotherapy.

With Mr Smith, the modern tendency to sue when disappointed reaches a new extreme. For Britain, at any rate. There is a lot of it about. The past few days have revealed a father suing the Midlands Examining Board over a GCSE paper in which his son got a poor grade. Then there were the traffic police who threatened to sue the Met because the noise from their motorbikes was making them deaf.

We have still to reach the heights of the absurdity that the United States has. In Manhattan, I came across a woman who sued the *New York Times* because she came out of her apartment, tripped over the paper and broke her leg; the newspaper made its Sunday edition too thick, she argued. That was 10 years ago. What they have got up to there since defies the imagination.

Nowadays, accidents cannot happen. There is always someone to blame. And if you can't find a direct culprit, you should blame the government.

Sometimes, of course, this reaction is appropriate enough. Who could object to the inquiry into Valujet, the cut-price firm whose plane crashed into the Everglades (killing 110 people), which revealed safety deficiencies so serious that the airline has been grounded? And it is meet to ask why suggestions went that the Dunblane gunman, Thomas Hamilton, should have had his gun licence revoked years ago. In cases like that, apportioning blame may be integral to the process of establishing systems that could prevent a repetition of the tragedy.

One might even have sympathy

with the woman who was paralysed in Louisiana by a couple who went on a killing spree in emulation of the protagonists of *Natural Born Killers*. She is suing the film's director, Oliver Stone, for £20m. Even if she has slim hope of winning, she has none the less, found an effective mechanism for chastisement which may help her to come to terms with being paralysed from the neck down after being shot in the throat.

The trouble with litigation is that the results it produces can seem so arbitrary. Fourteen police officers received £1.2m in damages last month for the emotional trauma suffered while helping victims of the Hillsborough football stadium disaster. This happened while the victims' fight for compensation remains unresolved. Some families of the 96 fans who died received only £12,000 compensation. Others have received nothing since the disaster, which was partly blamed on a lack of police crowd control. The contrast appears grotesquely disproportionate, as may be the consequences on the general morale of the emergency services, whose staff routinely deal with situations that the rest of us would consider well beyond the call of duty.

But the phenomenon goes deeper. The new alacrity with which we resort to law says something more profound about our desperate attempt to re-establish a sense of control in this increasingly out-of-control and insecure society. Even death is not exempt from the tendency, as the trend towards euthanasia reveals.

Yet to assuage this sense of helplessness, the urge to regulate, to repress and to restrict, is now given rein when it is not appropriate. At times, this may be difficult to point out without appearing callous. When 12 children and their teacher died in the M40 minibus crash in 1993, laws were introduced that from next year require children to wear seatbelts on all school minibuses and coaches. Radio 4's consumer programme *You and Yours*

recently claimed that some councils are already making a nonsense of the law by designating coaches as buses, which are exempt from the regulations. But should the rules have been introduced in the first place? Surely it is better for children to travel to concerts in a minibus without seats than to miss out on the enrichment such extramural activities bring.

In the end, it is about a balance of risk and a balance of advantage. When 35 passengers died in the 1988 Clapham rail disaster, moves were made to introduce a system to ensure that trains could not pass a signal at red, and kept within the speed limit. Eventually the Government (to Labour's fury) announced that it was dropping the idea as it would cost £700m to introduce across the rail network. As it was, the cost of improving the signalling system brought fare

increases to around twice the rate of inflation. Commuters deserted the railway for the roads. The irony is that they have a far greater chance of a fatal or serious accident in their cars – with 53 deaths and serious injuries per billion passenger kilometres compared with only three deaths on railways.

Balancing risk something we do unconsciously every day. Yet many of our decisions are uninformed. Most of us have no way of knowing whether it is more dangerous to feed our babies on powdered baby milk or to give our toddlers beefburgers (the beef is dodger). Most of us might assume that walking is safer than going by car (it isn't per billion kilometres there are 1.870 car crashes but there are 684 serious pedestrian accidents). And we fulminate about minuscule risks to which others might expose us while taking greater ones ourselves. with enthusiasm. (There are no accident-by-kilometre figures for bungee jumping or skiing, but the figure for cycling is 902 and for motorbikes is 1,870.) No doubt an enterprising lawyer will eventually discover a legal formula by which we might sue ourselves when our folly or negligence places us in a situation where something goes horribly wrong.

But why bother with that when you can cast around for someone else to take to court? There may be long-term consequences, of course. If we legally castigate doctors for giving inaccurate estimates of life expectancy, they will cease to give any such information at all. Then living would become an even more wanton experience. But that is some way off. Go ahead and litigate. You might feel that my advice, however, could be interpreted as reckless. In which case you could always sue.

# A century of Labour deceit and betrayal

**Alex Salmond argues that the Scots must learn from history**

**L**abour's retreats and betrayals on devolution are a century old. In 1888, Kier Hardie claimed that Scottish Home Rule was "just around the corner". In 1918, it was the third priority in the Labour manifesto, above housing, pensions and education; yet by 1927, a Labour supported Bill was talked out of Parliament to make way for a debate on "bugs, fleas and vermin". The first rigged referendum and the botched Bills of the late Seventies were followed by a decade of inaction. As recently as 1992, Labour was still claiming that a Scottish parliament would be "along in a tick".

Now in 1996, with another general election looming, Tony Blair has vowed that the Scottish people cannot trust Labour to deliver. It might be said that it has been a lesson long in the learning, but this latest betrayal, and its arrogant nature, may not be shrugged off like so many before.

Consider the following:

"What happens if other voices all know so well?" responds by saying "We say no and we are the state? We say yes and we are the people, and in the last analysis Scotland believes not in 'We the people' but in 'We the people'."

These were the words of Canon Kenyon Wright, Convener of the Executive of the Scottish Constitutional

Convention in March 1989, when considering both the legitimacy of the Convention and the inevitable refusal of Margaret Thatcher to pay heed at all to Scottish opinion. Though Thatcher is away, the good canon soldiers on, now having to act as the apologist for Labour duplicity at every turn. But this week he must have begun to suspect that the strident "Royal we" that stands in the way of democracy for Scotland is now none other than that newborn admirer of the "voice we all know so well" – Mr Blair.

Yet neither Kenyon Wright nor the people of Scotland should be surprised that Mr Blair now wishes, in the words of this newspaper on Saturday, "not to praise Home Rule, but to bury it". Since that first meeting of the Convention in 1989, Labour has publicly retreated from its commitments on devolution in four key areas. These retreats have accelerated under Mr Blair's leadership, and it is now certain that he does not want any dilution of his potential power in 10 Downing Street. And that means he does not want any measure of Scottish constitutional change.

In 1992, Labour devolution policy

Tory pressure in Middle England and retain control at Westminster.

There is as much similarity between this Blair Trap and a real consultative referendum as there is between genuine democracy and the old East European version with only one candidate and one party.

This time the "Royal we" from the Labour leader has been met with anger and resentment at the very heart of the Labour Party in Scotland, and with an increasing certainty in Scotland that at the top of Labour in London there is no commitment to Scotland's historic and urgent claims.

The Convention is now redundant. There is only one way to repair Scottish democracy and to restore the beating heart of a parliament to this ancient nation. Scots must empower themselves, with the strength of their own legal and constitutional right to popular sovereignty. They must choose the only option on which they can have a clear and absolute say. They must decide to become an independent nation and have done with deceit, trickery, rigged referendums and the well-meaning but half-baked hopes of those who will not learn from history.

The author is leader of the Scottish National Party.

## obituaries/gazette

### Alfred Marks

For many millions who remember the black-and-white years of early ITV, the name Alfred Marks will immediately conjure up not the smiling, balding, big-built star so much as the moustachioed, probably purple-faced ex-regimental sergeant major "Tibby" Britton as he roared the title to open each episode of *Alfred Marks Time!* This two-way pun - all the famous NCO ever did on the show - was typical of the gag-packed proceedings scripted by two of Marks's favourite young writers, Brad Ashton and Dick Vosburgh. Both of them are still working in comedy today, which sadly can no longer be said of Alfred Marks.

Marks was born in Holborn, London in 1921. His parents, Max Marks and Gabrielle Solomon, were Russian refugees who came to settle in the East End. As a boy young Alfred learned to win the favour of his chums by impersonating their teachers, and frequently gave one-boy shows on the landing of the tenement building where he lived. He was but nine years old when he made his first stage appearance as an amateur in a concert party put on by his local chapter of the Boys Brigade. Although bitten by the stage bug very early, it would be some 20 years before he eventually turned pro. Meanwhile he found work as an engineer's assistant and then as an auctioneer in Petticoat Lane.

Marks was 15 when the Second World War broke out and he promptly volunteered for the Royal Air Force. Crazy about flying, he served a full five years without ever going up in an aeroplane. After demob, like so many ex-servicemen, he found work at the famous Windmill Theatre in Piccadilly, but unlike those other ex-servicemen his work was behind the curtains as a scene-shifter, not on stage as a comedian.

However by studying the succession of young comics who used the Windmill as a jumping-off ground into showbusiness, Marks was able to cobble together an act which he used as his professional debut. This was at the Empire Theatre, Kilburn in 1946. Packing his performance with a multitude of voices, not so much impersonations of stars, as was common at the time, but with impressions of the many accents he had heard around the East End



Marks: suave impressionist with rich basso

Photograph: BBC

markets, he went down well, especially when he wound up with a straight ballad sung in a surprisingly good bass baritone.

Marks made his debut on BBC radio in 1946, as one of the newcomers in a discovery series called *Beginners Please*. This went out at the unlikely hour of 10.30am and was compered by Brian Reece, who became radio's popular PC 49.

At the time Miss Paddie O'Neil, five years old, was the commerce of *Navy Mixture*, the radio series for men and women in the Royal Navy. The two met when they were booked together to appear in a summer show called *Montmore* played at Brighton and in September, 1952, they married, the suave impressionist with the rich basso and the lion-tamer's daughter, circus bareback rider and trapeze artist.

They co-starred as a team in their own television series *Don't Look Now* (1950), supported by a young Ian Carmichael plus the Hedley Ward Trio, and later Marks became one of the comedy panel of *My Wildest Dream* (1956), sitting beside Tommy

Alfred Marks the film star began his career in 1951 with Pen-

ny Points to Paradise

in which he topped an almost all-Goat cast of Harry Secombe, Peter Sellers, Spike Milligan, his wife Paddie and somewhat surprisingly, Felix Mendelssohn and his Hawaiian Serenaders. This film, never seen on television, is considered lost, although Marks is supposed to have bought the last remaining print in order to suppress it.

His film roles were mostly comedic, but dramatic roles, at which he proved adept, turned up now and again. *Desert Mice* (1959) was a good wartime comedy with Marks as a major in charge of a troupe of entertainers including Sid James, Dick Bentley, Dora Bryan and Irene Handl. *The Frightened City* (1961) was the very opposite, with Herbert Lom organising a group of gangs into a protection racket; Marks was billed fourth under Sean Connery. Other notable films were *There Was A Crooked Man* (1960), in which he was second only to Norman Wisdom, and *She'll Have To Go* (1962), in which he was paired with Bob Monkhouse. Both of them were films that contrasted strongly with his role as a police superintendent in the all-star horror film, *Scream And Scream Again* (1969), which featured Vincent Price, Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing.

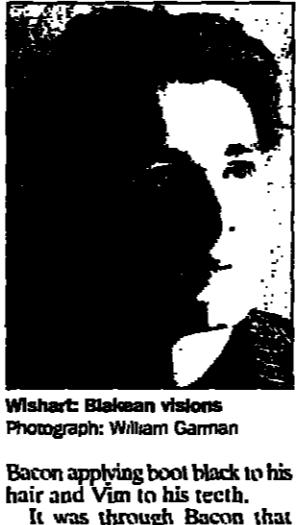
Marks's stage career was equally impressive, beginning with *High Button Shoe* (1950), continuing with *A Day In The Life Of* (1958), and including a long run in *Spring And Port Wine* (1966). He was also a great favourite in pantomime. His last radio series proper was *Marks In His Diary*, but he supplied voices and readings for Frank Muir's long run on Radio Four, *Frank Muir Goes Into...*

Character roles in television dramas included appearances in the series *Lovejoy*, *The Children's Ward* and *Minder*. He was appointed OBE in 1976, which delighted his parents and reminded Marks of the true act he once given to him by Bud Flanagan: "Remember, Alfie, an East End boy has to try twice as hard."

Denis Gifford

*Alfred Marks, comedian and actor; born London 28 January 1921; OBE 1976; married 1952 Paddie O'Neil (one son, one daughter); died London 1 July 1996.*

### Michael Wishart



Wishart: Blaean visions

Photograph: William Gammie

Bacon applying boot black to his hair and Vim to his teeth.

It was through Bacon that

Wishart met the painter Ann Dunn, daughter of the millionaire Sir James Dunn, whom he married in 1950. The event was

celebrated with 200 bottles of

Bollinger at a two-day, three-



A bold and courageous figure on the pitch: Keetch tackles George Best

Photograph: Allsport / Hulton Getty

### Bobby Keetch

By no stretch of the imagination could Bobby Keetch be described as an outstandingly gifted footballer, yet he stamped his extrovert personality indelibly on the London soccer scene in the mid-1960s.

A fearlessly abrasive central defender who enjoyed his playing pomp with Fulham, Keetch cut a bold and courageous figure on the pitch, his immaculately coiffured blond hair thatch and swashbuckling style making him instantly recognisable.

He was not exactly a shrinking violet off duty, either, being renowned at the time for a flamboyant lifestyle in which beautiful girls, fast cars and hectic socialising were *de rigueur*.

After failing to make the grade with his first club, West Ham United, whom he had joined after leaving school, Keetch revived his career by signing for Fulham in 1959. It

was immediately apparent to all at Craven Cottage that they had been joined by a character who was markedly different from the average young footballer.

Though extremely popular with his peers, after training the strikingly confident teenager tended not to accompany them to the local snooker hall, preferring instead to visit art galleries and antique shops, laying the foundations for a lucrative future when his playing days were done.

Keetch won a regular first-

team place late in the 1962-63 season, thereafter helping Fulham through several suc-

cessive (and successful) battles

to remain in the First Division.

His combative efforts compen-

sated for the likes of Johnny Haynes, Alan Mullery, George Cohen and Bobby Robson.

The muscular Londoner rel-

ished especially his confrontations with star forwards and it was said that the bigger the reputation of an opponent, the bigger the boots Keetch would wear for the occasion.

He was devastated in May 1966 when manager Vic Buckingham, seeking to establish a more cultured defensive approach, gave him a free transfer. At this stage, having made strides in the art world, he considered leaving football but was persuaded to enlist with Third Division Queen's Park Rangers. It was to prove a fruitful association, as he helped the Loftus Road club rise rapidly to the top flight before bowing out of the English game, still aged only 27, in 1969.

Emigration to South Africa and two years with Durban City followed, along with simultaneous business success.

Later Keetch, a family man, moved back to London where he continued to thrive in arts and antiques.

Earlier this year he was involved in the launch of a themed West End restaurant, Football Football, and though he no longer took an active part in professional soccer, he remained in touch through his close ties with Terry Venables and other leading figures in the game. The warmth of their tributes, on learning of his premature death through a stroke, speaks volumes for the impact of Bobby Keetch. He was, most definitely, one of a kind.

Ivan Ponting

*Bobby Keetch, footballer and businessman; born London 25 October 1941; played for Fulham 1959-66, Queen's Park Rangers 1966-69, Durban City 1969-70; died London 29 June 1996.*

With his sonorous monotone drawl, floridly handsome features and quiet erudition, Michael Wishart could have been taken for a rather urbane landowner, or perhaps a bookish squire. Anyone eavesdropping on the artist lunching at the Travellers' Club might therefore have been surprised to hear Wishart report that preparation for his last art lecture in Normandy consisted of two very dry Martinis and "a little amphetamine".

Michael Wishart's ability to balance high-society propriety with Bohemian kudos was ever a delicate acrobatic skill. He was born in 1928, son of the publisher Ernest Wishart (of Lawrence & Wishart), whose Marxist sympathies the boy did not inherit. He was brought up at Pulteney in Sussex. "As a child there were no quarrels, no terrors, no rages that could not be healed by running into the fields with a paintbox."

The local prisoner-of-war camp introduced more physical passions to those fields in the form of a blond German boy named Harm; thereafter Wishart would openly acknowledge his bisexuality. He had an early entry into hedonism: at 12, he was an *habitué* of David Tennant's Gargoyles Club in Soho, dancing with Tennant's young daughter, Pauline - to become a lifelong friend - and meeting her aesthetic uncle, Stephen Tennant, a decorative recluse whose eccentricities he would soon come to emulate.

Wishart was educated at Bedales, where he befriended Thom Gunn and read Charles Henri Ford's *Iow*. At the Central School of Arts and Crafts he was taught by Cedric Morris, while living with his uncle, the poet Roy Campbell; in 1947 he moved to Paris, sharing a room with Lucian Freud (who the following year married Wishart's

cousin, Kitty Epstein), drinking a lot, and meeting Marie-Laure de Noailles, Christian Bérard and Boris Kochno.

His patron Peter Watson introduced Wishart to Denham Fouts, an opium addict (he was amused to hear Cocteau describe Fouts as "a bad influence" who in turn introduced a besotted Wishart to the habit. Wishart memorably described Fouts as looking like "the best-looking boy at a West Coast college". He wore nothing but cream-coloured flannel trousers and had the torso of an athlete. Along his beautiful shoulders and golden forearms ran snow-white mice with startled pink eyes, which he stroked gently with the backs of his hands."

Wishart's memoirs, *High Divinity* (1977), reflect his conversational talent for such vivid cameos: Nancy Cunard's legs "so thin that it looked as though two threads of her knickers had come undone"; Francis

night party at Bacon's studio. A year later, Ann gave birth to a son, Francis, and they moved to the South of France. But the liaison was not destined to last, and the break-up in the late Fifties resulted in further alcoholic abuse. Wishart ended up in a psychiatric hospital, where "an ugly, green-faced girl with either one eye or two mouths... laughed insanely as she grappled between my legs with large tenacious hands... I do not recommend asylums to the same," he commented dryly.

Much of Wishart's subsequent life seemed to be spent in a search for profound satori (a Catholic convert, he revelled in its ritual, as well as revering its tenets). His sense of adventure was tinged with doomy pessimism. He was, perhaps, out of time, caught between the pre-war aesthetes, the wartime Bohemians and the post-war pop generation, and influenced by all three. He was

wilfully eccentric. Like Stephen Tennant's artfully composed letters, Wishart's communications spiralled round the page in colour-changing felt-tip pen. "I have conceived a searing desire for Michael Jackson," he wrote to me in 1988, "how I am to live apart from him with either one eye or two mouths... laughed insanely as she grappled between my legs with large tenacious hands... I do not recommend asylums to the same," he commented dryly.

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representing the difference between the decision to lend money which would not have been lent had the true value of the property been known, but not to the greater extent resulting from circumstances, such as a collapse in the property market, which were not a consequence of the valuer's negligence.

The House of Lords dis-

missed an appeal by York Mon-

tague Ltd against the decision

of Mr Justice May who, on

24 April 1995, awarded

South Australia Asset Man-

agement Corp damages of

£7,336,802.24; and allowed ap-

peals by Prudential Proper-

ty and Edward Group Ltd

from the decision.

Valuers who negligently over-

valued properties on which

lenders had advanced money

on mortgage were liable to

the lenders for losses sustained by them to the extent that those losses were caused by the

negligent valuations.

In the latter two cases, the plain-

tiffs were awarded damages

representing the difference be-

tween the sum lent and the

price at which the properties

were ultimately sold, following

a collapse in the property mar-

ket; the damages awarded in

these cases were reduced to

the difference between the negli-

gent valuations and the true

values of the properties con-

cerned.

Service Ltd and Edward

Group Ltd from the Court of

Appeal [1995] QB 375) who

affirmed decisions of Mr Ju-

stice Gage on 10 December

1993, awarding the United

Bank of Kuwait £1,309,876,

and of Judge Bryt QC on

1 October 1993 awarding

Mykredit Mortgage Bank plc

£3,055,555.52.

In each of the three cases the

plaintiff lenders were suing

the defendant valuers over

losses incurred as a result of

negligent valuations. In the

first case, May J awarded the

plaintiff damages within the

difference between the negli-

gent valuation and the true val-

ue of the property at the time.

This decision was upheld. In

the latter two cases, the

Economy: Pick-up coincides with confirmation of improved housing market and a leap in cash in circulation

# Manufacturing receives boost from consumers

DIANE COYLE  
 and NIC CICUTI

The benefits of the consumer recovery are finally starting to trickle down to industry. Manufacturing activity increased last month for the first time since December, with output returning to its highest level for more than a year, according to the monthly survey of purchasing managers.

The first signs of a pick-up in manufacturing coincided with further evidence of slow improvement in the housing market. Both the Halifax and Nationwide building societies reported growth of 4 per cent in house prices over the past year, the highest annual rise since 1991.

Other figures showed the biggest monthly jump in cash in circulation for more than six years in June and continuing rapid growth in consumer credit. Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said: "Economic life continues to improve."

Yesterday's batch of figures gave a boost to government hopes that the economy will be in peak shape in time for a spring election.

City opinion was divided over

whether the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, would skip in another cut in base rates this month, before the evidence of economic recovery gets much stronger.

"I find it difficult to believe he would risk another rate cut now," said David Owen, an economist at investment bank Kleinwort Benson. However, Ciaran Barr of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell said: "He might see an advantage to moving this month. It will be more difficult by September because the economy is recovering."

Mr Clarke will hold his monthly meeting with Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, tomorrow, followed by a pre-holiday meeting at

Makings of consumer goods enjoyed the biggest gains in output and new orders, according to the report. The intermediate goods sector expanded too, but output and orders for investment goods declined.

Peter Thomson, director general, was cautious about the improvement. "A manufacturing sector which is only just expanding is no cause for celebration," he said.

The CIPS warned that export order books remained weak, and price discounting was widespread. The prices index fell to its lowest since the survey began five years ago.

the end of July. And the Treasury will next week publish its new forecast for the economy. It will downgrade this year's growth outlook from the over-optimistic 3 per cent it pencilled in at Budget time.

The purchasing managers' index of activity climbed last month to 50.9, above the watershed between recession and recovery, from 47.6 in May. Output rose sharply, orders were higher, stocks of finished goods fell and cutbacks in employment were less pronounced than earlier in the year, the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply reported.

Makers of consumer goods

enjoyed the biggest gains in output and new orders, according to the report. The intermediate goods sector expanded too, but output and orders for investment goods declined.

The upward surge in house prices appeared to reach a temporary plateau last month, according to Halifax Building Society. Its figures showed that property prices dipped for the first time in almost a year.

But its report of a 0.3 per cent fall in June conflicted with a separate survey from Nationwide indicating that prices rose by 0.5 per cent last month.

Separate Bank of England

statistics showed that annual growth in mortgage lending edged up to 4 per cent in the year to May. The number of mortgages approved rose to 87,000, the highest for nearly two years.

Philip Williamson, corporate development director at Nationwide, said: "This month's rise in prices adds to the compelling range of evidence suggesting that a sustained

recovery in the housing market is under way."

Halifax predicts house prices will rise by around 5 per cent in 1996 - more cautious than City investment banks which reckon the rise could be 6-8 per cent.

The Bank of England reported that the monthly rise in cash in circulation in June was the biggest for more than six years, partly due to free-spending foreign football fans visiting

Britain for the Euro 96 competition.

Growth in M0, the narrow money measure, jumped by 1.3 per cent, taking its year-on-year growth to 7.3 per cent.

The influx of tourists for the football and the brief spell of sunshine provided part of the explanation. "The better weather brought out the shopper in us," said Kevin Darlington, at brokers Hoare Govett.

## Water chiefs awarded £100,000 'bonus'

MICHAEL HARRISON

Three directors of North West Water, led by chief executive Brian Staples, shared in special one-off bonuses which totalled almost £100,000 last year. The bonuses, for the "exceptional burden" caused by the £1.8bn takeover of electricity company Norweb, were disclosed yesterday.

However, Sir Desmond Pitcher, the chairman of United Utilities, the name given to the merged group, waived his entitlement to the special bonus, nor did he take his full annual bonus for the year.

The existence of the success fees emerged as United Utilities unveiled details of a new long-term incentive scheme to replace annual bonuses and share options and a big increase in base salaries for senior directors.

Mr Staples, whose bonus for the Norweb deal was £48,000, received total remuneration of £380,700. This year his base salary will increase from £235,000 to £300,000 to reflect increased responsibilities following the merger.

Sir Desmond's base salary will rise to £310,000 this year compared with £225,600 last year and total remuneration including bonuses and benefits of £346,200.

The other executives to get bonuses for pulling off the Norweb takeover were finance director Bob Ferguson and Derek Green, managing director of the regulated utility division, who received £32,000 and £18,650 respectively.

Under the new incentive plan, executive directors and selected senior executives will be eligible for short-term bonuses worth up to 40 per cent of base salary and payable in the form of shares.

Clark's is under pressure to seek a stock market flotation following the controlling family's rejection of a £189m takeover bid from Berisford three years ago. In return for rejecting the bid, the company then agreed to seek a stock market listing by 1998. Earlier this year it emerged that the company may miss the deadline if the management felt Clark's was not in sufficiently good shape. However, the management must take Clark's public soon or risk another eruption of shareholder discontent.

Following the restructuring Clark's will still employ over 13,000 people in seven factories. It also has more than 600 shops operating under the Clark's and K Shoes names.

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Comment, page 17.

## \$5bn ADT merger runs into trouble

PATRICK TOOHER

ADT, the secretive Bermuda-registered electronics and security group led by Michael Ashcroft, yesterday announced a \$5bn merger with Florida-based Republic Industries to create the world's biggest provider of electronic security services.

But the deal immediately ran into trouble when Western Resources, the Kansas-based power utility that owns 25.4 per cent of ADT, said it had not been consulted.

"We are not familiar with the details at this point, and we have no opinion on the terms," a Western spokesman said.

In a joint statement Republic said the merger was meant to be tax-free to ADT's shareholders and would be accounted for as a pooling of interests. Under its terms Mr Ashcroft will become a member of Republic's board of directors and remain chairman and chief executive of ADT. ADT shareholders will receive 0.9285 ordinary shares in Republic for each ADT share held and ADT will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Republic.

The exchange ratio was based on a price of \$26 per share of ADT common stock. The terms of the agreement already were approved by the two boards, the companies added.

ADT also issued Republic a warrant to acquire 15 million of its shares at an exercise price of \$20, which is exercisable if the deal is terminated for any reason.

Republic operates in the electronic security, waste management and automotive industries. It is run by Wayne Huizinga, who became chairman and

chief executive last year after selling the Blockbuster video stores group to US media and entertainment giant Viacom.

News of the Republic deal sent shares in ADT, which are listed in both London and New York, soaring 395p to £15.50 while shares in another Automated Security Holdings (ASH), a rival electronic security which is the subject of a bid from ADT, rose 8p to 45p.

Last night ADT insisted its proposed acquisition of ASH will go ahead as planned.

Two weeks ago it bid £24.9m for loss-making ASH, the troubled burglar alarms group.

ADT said the deal, involving three of its shares being swapped for every 92 held in ASH, would make it a market leader for electronic security in the UK and southern California.

It is already the largest supplier of electronic security in North America and is also a significant force in Europe. In November ADT raised £222m from the sale of its European car auctions business to concentrate on electronic security. The ASH deal is expected to become effective before its merger with Republic, and ASH shareholders will still receive common shares in ADT to settle the deal.

Under Mr Ashcroft's aegis ADT was transformed from a low-mARGIN office services company into a leading electronic security and car auction group. But the onset of recession left ADT saddled with debts of \$1.3bn and raised concerns about the opaque nature of its accounts. Confidence among investors drained away and from a peak of more than £20 in 1989, the shares crashed to less than £3 in little over two years.

Source: FT Information

## Clark to cut 1,400 jobs ahead of flotation

NIGEL COPE

C&J Clark, the family-owned shoe maker which is being groomed for a stock market flotation, is to cut 1,400 jobs in a major re-structuring that will see three factories close.

The job losses are the latest in a string of factory closures and redundancies at the 171-year-old company which prides itself on its paternalist, Quaker roots.

The factories to close are at Plymouth, where 320 jobs will go, at Shepton Mallet where 420 will be made redundant and the K brand factory in Astham-in-Furness, Cumbria where a further 245 jobs will be cut. A re-organisation at the Kentside factory in Kendal will cost 25 jobs. A further 330 will be shed at the company's head office in Street, Somerset.

The head office cuts are particularly painful as the town was largely built by the Clark family who provided schools, libraries and swimming pools as well as a place to live and work.

Staff wept as the job losses were announced following a



Closures: Tim Parker announced the bad news

meeting between union leaders and senior managers at the company's Somerset headquarters in Street. The mayor

of Shepton Mallet, Terry O'Connor, who faces possible redundancy himself as a Clark's employee, said he was "devastated" by the news. "It's terrible after all these years of working so hard to be told 'sorry it's not good enough, we can get it made cheaper elsewhere. Nobody cares about British workers any more."

The cause of the re-structuring is a slump in demand in Clark's UK shoe business as well as increased competition from lower cost manufacturers overseas. Last year Clark's UK shoe profits fell from £16m to £13.2m. The company made more than 600 job cuts earlier this year when it closed its factories in Radstock.

Tim Parker, the former head of Kenwood Appliances who was brought in as Clark's new chief executive last year, said:

"These changes are designed to strengthen and develop Clark's worldwide business. No one is ever happy about the effect of

## Government backs down on ads ban

The Government yesterday

backed down in the face of continued pressure from ITV companies, withdrawing a controversial amendment to the Broadcasting Bill that would have outlawed teletext advertising by Channel 3 franchises.

Several ITV companies, including HTV, Scottish and Central, had complained about the amendment, which they believed unfairly advantaged Teletext Ltd, the national teletext company controlled by Associated Newspapers, publishers of the Daily Mail and the Mail on Sunday.

A spokesman for HTV said: "They have been sensible about this, and have absorbed new information about the market." ITV companies had argued that offering teletext advertising in conjunction with on-screen advertisements attracted significant regional business. HTV, licence holder for Wales and the West, said last night that it earned as much as £500,000 in advertising revenues from companies attracted by the combination of teletext and on-screen formats.

While the U-turn was applauded, ITV companies continued to express concern last night over the Government's apparent willingness to bow to lobbying by special interests.

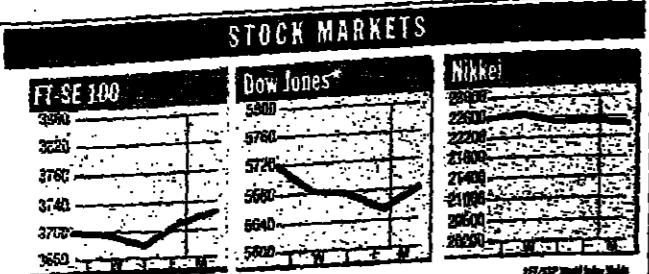
Associated chief executive Sir David English was said by one ITV source to have "the key to the door" at National Heritage.

It is annoying they are open to this kind of pressure."

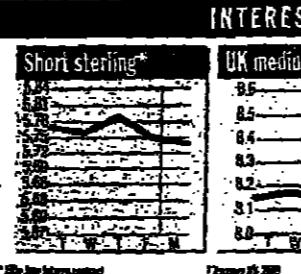
Said another senior ITV source: "We won this one, but we only seem to win on small issues."

Teletext Ltd, which provides teletext services on Channel 3 and Channel 4 nationwide, had argued that ITV companies were unfairly taking revenues away, and had questioned whether the sales of teletext advertising space was consistent with Government policy. The company, which has a public-service mandate to provide teletext services but which is free to take advertising, has built up a profitable business, particularly in the market for travel advertising. The amendment was withdrawn yesterday as the Bill went through the report stage in the House of Commons.

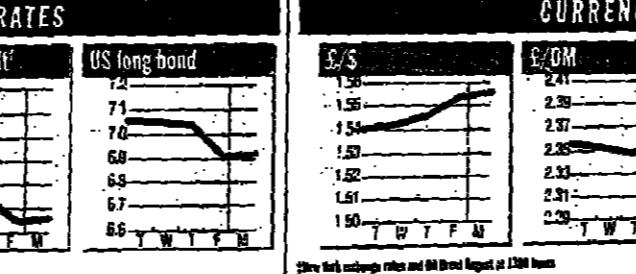
## STOCK MARKETS



## INTEREST RATES



## CURRENCIES



## MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Index	Price	Day's change	Change (%)	1995 High	1995 Low	1996 High	1996 Low
FSE 100	3725.60	+14.60	+0.4	3857.10	3639.50	4,070.00	3,600.00
FTSE 250	4370.40	+17.20	+0.4	4568.60	4015.30	4,342.00	3,900.00
FTSE 350	1878.20	+7.30	+0.4	1945.40	1816.00	1,930.00	1,830.00
FT Small Cap	2189.64	-1.34	-0.1	2244.38	1954.95	2,250.00	1,950.00
FT All Share	1862.86	+6.63	+0.4	1924.17	1791.95	1,930.00	1,750.00
New York	5680.85	+26.22	+0.5	5778.00	5029.24	5,910.00	5,000.00
Tokyo	2245.49	-75.26	-0.3	2266.80	1973.70	2,250.00	1,950.00
Hong Kong	11002.61	-18.29	-0.2	11594.99	10204.87	11,800.00	10,500.00
Frankfurt	2564.00	+2.61	+0.1	2573.69	2253.36	2,600.00	2,200.00

Source: FT Information

## business

# Highland bids £180m for rival Macallan

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Highland Distilleries, maker of the Famous Grouse, yesterday launched a £180m bid for rival malt whisky producer Macallan-Glenlivet in conjunction with Suntory, the Japanese whisky group. The 152.5p-a-share offer is pitched at the same price that Highland paid Remy Cointreau in January for its 36 per cent holding in Macallan and is below the current share price.

It had the unusual effect yesterday of cutting the price of the bid target and boosting that of the bidder. Macallan's shares slumped 29p to 158p, while Highland's rose 3p to 374p.

The two bidders already have a close relationship with Macallan, a key supplier of "fillings" or ingredients for the Famous Grouse and whiskies produced by Suntory's Morrison Bowmore Distillers subsidiary.

Together they control 51 per cent of Macallan and are mounting the bid through a new joint venture company, HS Distillers, which could give Highland control of up to 75 per cent of Macallan. Maximum consideration under the offer would be £85m.

It represents the first hostile move on a Scotch whisky group since Whyte & Mackay's initially unsuccessful move on Invergordon Distillers in 1991. As such it will ruffle the feathers of the highly incestuous industry more than usual.

Macallan's executive chairman, Allan Shiach, refused to comment before a board meeting to discuss the bid today. He said: "We have had friendly commercial dealings with Highland for a very long time and prior to that with Robertson &

Baxter [one of Highland's associated companies]."

However, Macallan's management has made it clear in the past that it would not welcome a bid from Highland. Crucial to the outcome of the bid will be the attitude of the Harbinson and Shiach families, which control around 20 per cent of Macallan, of which the chairman is a son.

Alan Gray, an analyst with Edinburgh brokers Sutherland and Partners, reckons they will be disappointed by Highland's offer and could be reluctant to accept. "I believe Macallan is a good company. It is poised for profits growth and has good potential. I believe you could say it is the jewel in the Scottish whisky crown... I believe Highland will need to pay a full price for that."

If the family saw profits moving forward at Macallan, they could decide to sit it out for a year or more, he said, which could be messy for Highland.

Brian Ivory, Highland's chief executive, described the offer as full, fair and generous, representing an exit price/earnings multiple of 31 times historic earnings. He described Macallan as a "superb" malt whisky, which is number four in the world by volume but in esteem closer to number one.

The bid "adds what is arguably the very best malt whisky to what is arguably the very best blended whisky".

There would be significant cost savings from eliminating Macallan's head office costs and a decision to merge the distiller's Speyside base with that of the existing Highland Malt Distilling subsidiary, currently situated in Glasgow.

The right medicine: Sir Richard Sykes has announced a new initiative on Aids

## Glaxo raises £580m for Warner-Wellcome stake

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Glaxo Wellcome, the giant drugs group, yesterday sold most its share of the Warner Wellcome non-prescription drugs business, inherited with its £98m acquisition of Wellcome last year, for £900m (£580m). The deal involves the immediate transfer of the UK and US ends of the operation. Purchase agreements for interests in Canada, Mexico, Australia and New Zealand expected to be signed in the third quarter, bringing in a further £150m (£97m).

The proceeds will be used to net debt which stood at £3.2bn at the end of December. Taking account of repayments since then, the new money will reduce

that figure to around £2.4bn. Although Glaxo's share of the business being sold contributed £74m to profits in the 18 months to December, its disposal is not expected to have any effect on future results.

The assets include over-the-counter medicines such as as Sudafed, Acitifed, Neosporin and Nic. Glaxo will, however, retain its holding in a separate Glaxo Warner Lambert joint venture set up in 1993 to market over-the-counter version of Glaxo's prescription drugs. Separately, Glaxo Wellcome, headed by Sir Richard Sykes, yesterday announced the signature of a development deal for a potential new anti-AIDS treatment with Vertex, a Massachusetts-based drug discov-

ery company. The two companies have obtained a non-exclusive licence to the protease inhibitor code-named 141W94 from GD Searle, the pharmaceuticals subsidiary of the US group Monsanto. Glaxo will pay £15m and Vertex \$10m for the licensing rights, while, separately, the British group has made a \$5m equity injection into Vertex.

The drug, designed by Vertex, is one of a new generation which inhibits replication of the HIV virus. Several compounds based on protease inhibitors have recently won approval in various world drug markets. Initial trials on 141W94 have been promising and Glaxo started a combined phase I-II trial in December.

Comment, page 17.

## Slater invests in tennis hopeful

### CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK

Tim Henman is the latest in a long line of British hopefuls at Wimbledon. What many people may not realise is that he was sponsored at school by none other than Jim Slater, the one-time minister of sports. "Nine years ago I got fed up with watching British tennis players on TV – none of them ever got into the final stages, let alone the quarter finals," says Mr Slater.

He set up a scheme with former tennis ace David Lloyd to sponsor a series of school boys, under which 11

boys a year would have their fees at Reeds School in Surrey paid for by Mr Slater. Each day the boys would travel to Mr Lloyd's tennis centre nearby and be coached on an individual basis.

Tim Henman was one of the early beneficiaries. Mr Slater says he started similar sponsorships for British chess players. "We used to

have no grand masters, now we have 20." Is he planning help any other sports? "I might do – I'll have to see which ones are limping."

Picture the scene: The board of Contessa, the lady's underwear retailer owned by Facia, is in the process of being sold by Facia's receivers to Chancerealm, the vehicle that bought Raymans from the receivers of Pentos.

Dick Tower, a distinguished company lawyer who has recently retired as senior partner of City solicitors Richards Butler, is amongst those at the meeting to seal the deal. As the grey-haired Mr Tower, a non-executive director of Chancerealm, raises a query about a clause in the contract, a young lawyer from Nabarro Nathanson who quite clearly doesn't know him, turns to him and says: "Now look, you don't worry. That's why you've hired lawyers – to think about things like that."

Mr Tower, no doubt reflecting on his lengthy career in the law, including over 20 years with Richards Butler, blinks but says nothing. Needless to say, after the meeting, the young lawyer was suitably mortified on being told of her gaucherie.

For the last ten years Tim Hayward, a mild mannered, affable chap, has been able to inspire terror in even the



Jim Slater: 'I got fed up with watching Brits lose'

most hardened businessman – just by walking through the door. He has been head of the receivership department at big six accountancy firm KPMG.

Now someone else is taking up the reins – but new head of UK Corporate Recovery Mike Wheeler will not be marching into any businesses to close them down.

Mr Wheeler isn't even a licensed insolvency practitioner. It turns out that the big accountancy firms now make far more money quietly sorting out banks' problems with client companies behind the scenes than they ever did burying businesses.

Mr Wheeler has been seconded to Midland Bank and worked for Bank of America, and his most testing job so far has been trying to bring some sense of order to debt-laden EuroDisney's 200-odd banks. Definitely not a Mickey Mouse job.

If you hanker impatiently after a key to the executive washroom, pay close attention. John Sunderland, newly promoted to succeed David Wellings as chief executive at Cadbury Schweppes, has always been taken great care of his appearance. He used to sport a snappy "Alan Sugar" style closely cropped beard, along with immaculately coiffured hair. Then a couple of years ago a colleague took Mr Sunderland aside and dropped a bombshell: "You'll never get to be chief executive with a beard." Off came the beard and – hey presto!

	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend
Aberdeen Steel (F)	18.2m (15.4m)	2.2m (0.54m)	11.8p (2.2p)	n/a (-)
Associated Mining (F)	34.1m (20.6m)	2.5m (2.6m)	11.5p (13.0p)	2.45p (-)
Baileys (F)	2.35m (3.64m)	2.4m (1.5m)	15.4p (11.6p)	2.55p (2.2p)
Carco Engineering (F)	158.5 (174m)	18.2m (16.7m)	22.7p (18.6p)	7.51p (-)
Cotes Group (F)	15.3m (15.2m)	-3.7m (3.9m)	-13.9p (2.7p)	n/a (-)
Haileigh (F)	29.0m (30.4m)	1.8m (8.4m)	17.4p (8.2p)	48 (-)
Journals (F)	7.1m (5.2m)	0.36m (0.22m)	8.42p (4.93p)	- (-)
MFI (F)	78.6m (72.1m)	58.1m (62.1m)	8.11p (7.51p)	2.9p (-)
Microgen Holdings (F)	38.3m (34.8m)	4.8m (4.5m)	8.0p (7.3p)	2.49p (2.3p)
Phoenix Timber (F)	24.9m (17.5m)	0.61m (0.74m)	1.61p (2.17p)	0.29p (-)
Scottish & Newcastle (F)	3.0m (2.0m)	1.57m (2.04m)	18.5p (36.4p)	12.88p (-)
Westminster Sealtest (F)	2.8m (4.7m)	-4.7m (-3.2m)	-1.0p (-0.8p)	- (-)
(F) - Final				

In Today's Health Services section, Nick Timmins, The Independent's Public Policy Editor, reviews the reforms The Private Health sector is undergoing as a result of the two largest medical insurers asserting their positions as active purchasers of the existing Private Services. It also follows the lives of two G.P.'s in an analytical comparison between the Public and Private Health Services.

In continuation of The Independent's weekly profile of prominent members of the N.H.S., Abigail Raynor will be interviewing Stephen Thornton, the current Chief Executive of The Cambridge and Huntingdon N.H.S. Trust.

For all the latest news and appointments in the Health Sector turn to

pages 9 - 12

In Today's Section two of The Independent



Lang argues for rethink on regions

MICHAEL HARRISON

Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, will today flesh out another key strand of policy by rejecting central government intervention in the regions in favour of locally-coordinated action schemes.

The minister is expected to argue that Britain's regions have undergone huge changes in the last 15 years which requires a shift in policy away from large public subventions for once-depressed areas of the country.

Mr Lang will use a keynote speech to the annual conference of the British Chambers of Commerce in Birmingham to highlight the way in which regional disparities have narrowed since the early 1980s.

In 1984, for instance, unemployment was 7.5 per cent higher in the North than the South while there was also a large gap in relative levels of pay. Now, however, the unemployment gap has narrowed to 2.5 per cent while Scotland ranks second only to the South East in the earnings league.

Mr Lang is expected to argue that it is no longer true to claim that large areas of the country are uniformly depressed and that Government, regional and inward investment policy over the years has helped revitalise areas such as south Wales which now has a dominant electronics sector. He will say that locally-coordinated schemes to provide funding for pockets of deprivation or economic disadvantage within regions are more suitable than massive state subvention organised from Whitehall.

He will also argue that the decoupling of the North from the South in terms of prosperity that threatened to happen in the early 1980s has not materialised and indeed that there has been much greater convergence through, for instance, the relocation of head offices of major industries to the regions.

Comment, page 17.

## Amstrad hives off ACE

TOM STEVENSON  
City Editor

Amstrad is living off its loss-making consumer electronics operation, ACE, in an attempt to make it more attractive to Psion, the electronic organiser maker that last week said it was planning a £230m bid.

The former engine-house of Amstrad's rise to prominence in the 1980s will be injected into Betacom, a telephone distributor that Amstrad controls through a 67 per cent shareholding. No payment will be made by Betacom for the audio, television, VCR and household goods which are expected to add about £25m of sales to its existing turnover of £15m.

Psion shares added 60p to 410p, recovering much of the company's recent lost ground, in relief that the company would not inherit a loss-making operation in a business it had little experience or interest in. Psion has made it clear that the attraction of Amstrad lies in its Dancall mobile phone operation which it believes will allow it to maintain a lead in the increasingly converging worlds of computing and telecommunications. Psion would also hold on to Amstrad's cable and satellite equipment manufacturing businesses which are not to be transferred to Betacom with the rest of ACE.

The integration with Betacom

## Sunderland to head Cadbury Schweppes

NIGEL COPE

Mr Sunderland is a career Cadbury employee who joined the company 28 years ago. He has since worked in the confectionery and soft drinks sides of the business in South Africa and Ireland. He also helped launch the Coca Cola Schweppes joint venture in 1987 and worked on the acquisitions of the Irn-Bru and Bassett confectionery businesses. He joined the board in 1993. "He's a good all-rounder," a spokesman said.

Several senior management appointments will follow Mr Sunderland's elevation. The group is still bidding in its Dr Pepper acquisition in the US. Last month it announced it was selling its 51 per cent stake in the cola soft drinks venture.

another 6p yesterday. This is within touching distance of the shares' all-time high since they came to the market at 115p in 1982.

Analysts have upgraded their pre-tax profit forecast to £82m which puts the shares on a forward rating of 18. That is high enough given the patchy recent record.

## ANS returns to health

Associated Nursing Services, the nursing homes operator, has had a chequered recent history. The early 1990s were marked by unfortunate diversifications, less than conservative accounting policies and a momentary splash of red ink.

Since 1994, when ANS used the strength of the shares (which peaked at 297p) to raise £10m from shareholders, it has run into the general gloom surrounding state financing of care of the elderly. That coincided with an ambitious expansion programme, and as a result the share price has fallen steadily and stands at 139p, up a penny yesterday.

Results for the year to March did little to improve sentiment, though they carried an encouraging message. Profits dipped from £2.63m to £2.51m in the year to March, which translated into underlying growth of 14 per cent when £479,000 of one-off charges were added back.

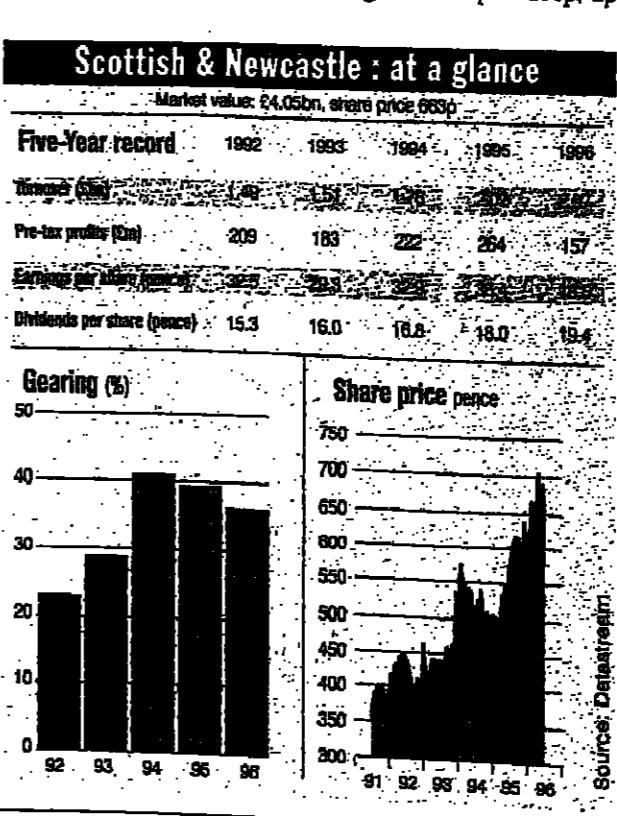
Those costs should help assuage some of the concerns surrounding the group. Roughly £300,000 related to higher finance charges following a decision to tighten up the treatment of capitalised interest. A further £20,000 or so represented the cost of shedding seven people as a result of cutting out the regional layer of management.

ANS appears to have aimed well in targeting areas for new homes, particularly its decision to concentrate on the South East of England. The six operations it started during the year all are now profitable.

Overall occupancy has moved up from 88 to 90 per cent and ANS is getting to grips with the four homes hit by local authority financing problems.

The group is the biggest in London, with 760 beds built or under development. Profits of £3.3m this year would put the shares on a forward rating of 9. Given recent corporate activity, ANS could be attractive to a bidder. Hold.

### Scottish & Newcastle: at a glance





## COMMENT

You might have thought taking over your neighbouring utility was a bit of a doddle. Apparently not. United Utilities' chief executive and two of his fellow directors shared out close on £100,000 in one-off bonuses'

## Rich rewards for a bit of a doddle at Norweb

For once Sir Desmond Pitcher is not the villain of the piece. The chairman of United Utilities eschewed a special bonus for his little spot of empire-building in the North-west last year and has even magnanimously agreed not to take the full annual bonus to which he was entitled. In all other respects, however, the corporate gravy train rolls on with the full Greenbury seal of approval to boot. You might have thought that taking over your neighbouring utility was a bit of a doddle. Apparently not. Brian Staples, United Utilities' chief executive and two of his fellow directors shared out close on £100,000 in one-off bonuses - success fees to you and me - for the "exceptional burden borne by them" in acquiring Norweb.

Happily for them the easing of this burden does not end there. In addition to the one-off fees plus a healthy uplift in base salaries, Messrs Staples and Co. are in line for thumping long-term incentive payments in return for a performance not likely to stretch them. Indeed the cost savings already identified from the Norweb takeover alone will probably be enough to get United Utilities a long way down the road to one of the targets, 2 per cent real growth in earnings per share over three years.

Having already sounded out institutional investors, the board is presumably confident of getting the new scheme past the annual meeting later this month. But small shareholders might wonder why they are having

to fork out for performance targets that became self-fulfilling the moment Norweb was in the bag.

### The Lang doctrine of competition

Is there a "Lang doctrine" of competition? A policy beginning to emerge from the case history of recent decision making and policy statements? A distinctive approach does indeed seem to be developing, though it is easy to see why the Trade and Industry Secretary should be accused of inconsistency.

In mergers and competition policy Ian Lang is returning to the free market principles of the early years of Mrs Thatcher's government, after the more corporatist approach adopted by his predecessor Michael Heseltine. As far as Mr Heseltine was concerned, virtually anything went so long as it resulted in the creation of national champions capable of putting on a good show internationally. It didn't seem to matter too much if domestic competition was harmed in the process. No doubt this exaggerates and caricatures the nature of the Heseltine regime, but essentially this is what was happening.

Mr Lang's approach is markedly different. He worries much more about the effects of merger on competition, even as shown in his decision to block the two generating bids for distribution companies, if the damage is

to prospective competition rather than the world as it stands. This must ultimately be the right approach, for the destruction of competition and its replacement with powerful monopolies not only harms the consumer, but ultimately the economy too by making it less competitive internationally. If Mr Lang has a fault, it is in his failure adequately to explain this shift in approach. His excuse is the ever present possibility of legal challenge. Don't say too much, is the advice of DTI lawyers, or they will wack you for judicial review.

Even if this were true, which is debateable, it would none the less be preferable to the present state of affairs, in which industrialists and the City still do not have a clear idea of where Mr Lang is coming from. It cannot be right in a mature democracy that quite significant shifts in policy and consequent decision making are not adequately explained because of the possibility that clever lawyers will find a way of earning a fee out of them.

### Making the Stock Exchange work

The London Stock Exchange has had a dreadful few years, muddling up its new settlement system and rowing with its members over new trading systems. Not surprisingly, some people wonder whether the real fault lies with the structure of the organisation itself. The conventional view is that the exchange has had difficulty adapting to developments in world markets because it has had to cope with the powerful vested interest of big market markers, who dominate trading. If this is true, yesterday's drastic cutbacks are hardly going to solve the problem.

One proposed solution would for the exchange to set itself up as an independent public company with an executive management able to take the harsh decisions required to prosper against competition from European and US exchanges. The hub of the argument for radical reform is that the exchange is too important to London as a financial centre to be left to its members, who can see beyond the end of their self-interested noses. The public interest requires the exchange to evolve from a trade association into a proper business.

It is hard to see the point of this. The big members are responsible for the largest part of share dealing in London. The only way a large marketplace will continue is if it is continually adapted to their needs. The best practical discipline on the exchange is to encourage as far as possible the development of other competing markets in London.

### Cable foolish to tangle with Sky

The cable TV industry perhaps ought not

loudly, as even a cursory glance at the relevant figures confirm. The Cable Communications Association proudly announced yesterday that the industry's total revenues were likely to exceed £1bn this year compared to just under £1bn for BSkyB, the satellite TV company. Amazing. The problem is that the comparison is an entirely spurious one. For a start, most cable operators make the bulk of their money from selling telephone services, not cable TV. Sky, whatever else it might be called, is not a telephone company.

Nynex, the country's second largest cable operator, earned twice as much revenue last year from telephony (residential and business) than from cable TV, and that record is broadly indicative of the whole industry. In fact cable television itself will generate just £400m this year for the industry. This compares with the £600m Sky will get from its direct-to-home subscribers. On top of that Sky makes a big chunk of money from providing the cable operators with the back of their TV channels, making cable's "we beat you" comparison look even more ridiculous. Quite a bit of what the cable operators make out of television is just rerouted Sky. Cable has got some things to boast about. It is winning 60,000 new telephone customers a month, and is responsible for more than 50 per cent of new subscribers to Sky. By 2005, its subscriber base is likely to outstrip Sky's by 2 to 1. But to claim it is beating Sky is just silly.

## Licences for oil exploration to go to highest bidder

MICHAEL HARRISON

Oil exploration licences are to be auctioned off to the highest bidder for the first time in an attempt to encourage greater exploitation of mature areas of the North Sea, the Government announced yesterday.

Tim Eggar, the Energy Minister, said that 20-30 blocks in the UK Continental Shelf were likely to be put out to competitive tender this autumn. If the experiment proves successful annual auctioning rounds will follow.

Under the present system North Sea blocks are awarded to exploration groups on the basis of the work programme they commit to undertake. But this has led in some cases to oil companies sitting on unexploited acreage for long periods.

Mr Eggar said he wanted a licensing system that would stimulate "rapid and innovative" exploration of the UK Continental Shelf.

Awarding licences through competitive bidding would encourage exploration groups to bring fields to development promptly or relinquish them.

Bidders will still have to pass a "pre-qualification" test of their technical competence and

financial viability. But beyond that licences will go to the highest bidder.

The bid themselves are likely to take the form of up-front payments but they could also feature staged licence fees or royalty payments.

Mr Eggar would not put a figure on how much the exercise might raise for the Exchequer or what the average block might be auctioned off for.

But he stressed that it was not designed to be a "way of paying off the national debt in a hurry".

He also stressed that the auctioning process would be limited to mature acreage and would not apply to frontier fields such as those to the west of the Shetlands.

In the Gulf of Mexico where a similar experiment has been successfully tried blocks have been auctioned off for a minimum fee of \$100,000 and smaller exploration groups have not been disadvantaged.

Mr Eggar said he believed a similar pattern would evolve in the North Sea, enabling smaller and nimble exploration groups to benefit.

The move to auctioning of licences will take place this autumn when the Government

launches the 18th offshore licensing round. Licences will also be granted for a shorter period, probably of between three and six years compared with the 12 years at present.

Earlier this year the Government conducted a review of the fallen North Sea oil blocks which were originally awarded in 1983 but have since lain unexploited. Of the 115 blocks identified as fallow there are now plans for activity in 72 over the next 12 months while 14 are to be relinquished, allowing them to be relicensed to other exploration companies.

Since 1984 almost 6,000 wells have been drilled in the UK Continental Shelf while proven reserves of 2520 million tonnes of oil and 1750 billion cubic metres of gas have been established.

The development of increasingly sophisticated and cost-effective exploration techniques have allowed companies to exploit areas previously regarded as beyond their reach.

But Mr Eggar said it was important to get these techniques applied as much acreage as possible, particularly areas not being drilled or surveyed in mature areas such as the North Sea basin.

## Streamlined Exchange to shed 400 jobs

PETER RODGERS

Financial Editor

Almost 400 jobs are to be lost at the London Stock Exchange, following a year-long review whose conclusions were announced yesterday.

The total includes 270 staff already expected to go as a result of the transfer of share settlement to the independent Crest system, and another 120 departures by the end of next year as part of a streamlining at all levels of the organisation. This will leave the Exchange with about 550 staff.

John Kemp-Welch, chairman of the Exchange, introduced its new corporate plan which included the job cuts as "the biggest set of changes the Exchange has experienced since Big Bang", the reforms of which were launched in 1986.

Fields Wicker-Muirin, director of strategy and finance, said the Exchange aimed to cut its costs to match an income expected to plummet to £120m by the 1992-9 financial year, compared with £200m in the year just ended.

She added that the Exchange aimed to cut out some layers of management and further decisions would be taken in detailed planning over the next three months.

This would produce a "smaller, flatter and more outward looking organisation". It was important to be able to take de-



Big Bang Two: John Kemp-Welch says a report will back the present structure

ciations rapidly and implement them and that meant less bureaucracy.

Mr Kemp-Welch said that a report on the way the organisation was managed would back

the present structure in which an executive committee of seven full-time officials runs the organisation day to day.

There have been suggestions that the committee, chaired by

Mr Kemp-Welch, should be overhauled following the departure of Michael Lawrence, the chief executive who was dismissed earlier this year.

Mr Lawrence was widely criti-

cised by members for steering through radical changes of policy without adequately consulting them.

Mr Kemp-Welch said a continuation of the executive committee system was "strongly endorsed" by the Exchange board last Thursday. A summary of the report, by Ian Penderleath and Ian Salter, the two deputy chairmen, is to be published shortly.

Mr Kemp-Welch added that the question of whether the Exchange should convert to a public company owned by a wider group of shareholders than its members was "not on the agenda at the present time". But that did not mean the Exchange would not return to the subject in the future, he said.

The Exchange said it aimed to keep at least 90 per cent of world-wide trading in British equities; to attract at least 95 per cent of British companies raising capital by public issues and to provide the main listing and trading markets for at least 50 per cent of issuers from target emerging market countries.

In terms of dealing costs per unit of turnover, London ranked with New York among the larger exchanges in the world.

The Exchange said its income per head would be greater than rivals such as the New York Stock Exchange and the German exchanges and only surpassed by Tokyo.

## Loans debacle may cost White House \$10bn

DAVID USBORNE

New York

The Savings and Loans debacle of the 1980s returned to haunt Washington yesterday after a ruling from the US Supreme Court upheld claims for damages against the government from three S&L institutions.

The ruling was a defeat for the US administration which may now face paying an additional \$10bn (£6.4bn) in damages. The US government has already paid

an estimated \$130bn to dismantle the S&L affair.

Encouraged by relaxed regulations introduced by the Reagan administration, large numbers of the S&Ls, broadly akin to British building societies, fell over the precipice in the mid-1980s after promising higher-than-usual interest rates on deposits before being hit by waves of loans that went sour.

At issue was a 1989 law that sought to rescue the industry by tightening some of the rules ap-

plied to it. Previously, S&Ls that took over insolvent ones had been allowed to count the insolvent S&Ls' losses as "goodwill" assets.

To help them satisfy minimum capital requirements, they were also permitted to double count as "capital credit" government funds provided to help them take over the defunct banks.

The court ruled that by using the 1989 law to eliminate these financial incentives, the government had broken its contracts with three S&Ls which had each

taken over ailing competitors and thereby driven them into financial difficulties.

Two Winstar Corp of Minnesota and State Savings of Iowa went to the wall, while the third, Glendale Federal Bank of California, was obliged to raise an additional \$450m to satisfy the capital requirement rules.

The White House may now be liable in about 100 similar cases from S&Ls pending against it, which could lead to a final damages bill of \$10bn. Glendale Fed-

## Institutions may sue Wickes

PATRICK TOOHER

and NIGEL COPE

Institutional investors in Wickes yesterday raised the prospect of suing the company or selling their shares if a bidder emerged once an auditor's investigation into serious accounting problems at the troubled DIY retailer was completed.

Major shareholders will decide their next step once Wickes has established the full extent of a profits overstatement scam that may have cost £20m last year alone. A report into the accounting irregularities begun last week may not be concluded for another fortnight, sources of the internal inquiry.

Separately, Merrill Lynch said banks had sold off most of the copper controlled by Sumitomo on the London Metal Exchange. Union Bank of Switzerland, which took over management of Sumitomo's long positions, liquidated a large number of contracts in late June, and other banks had followed suit. Merrill Lynch said Yasuo Hansanaka, the trader at the centre of inquiries, may have maintained hidden stocks of copper in Sumitomo's name.

If a bid fails to emerge, investors could try to force through more boardroom lev-

els changes to instil confidence in the company.

Henry Sweetbaum, former chairman and chief executive, became a senior management casualty when he resigned last Wednesday, the day before the scale of the problem became apparent. Finance director Stuart Stradling is also set to go once the current investigation is carried out by auditors Price Waterhouse and law firm Linklaters & Paines is over. Wickes has also suspended two managers pending the result of the internal inquiry.

The initial investigation estimates that profits may have been overstated by as much as £40m-50m over the last few years.

The overstatement of profits mainly relates to payments made by suppliers to secure contracts with Wickes. The company apparently encouraged suppliers to pay in advance a percentage of the additional profit that would be generated by new store openings. This had the effect of inflating profits in the first year and boosting bonuses for management.

Shares in Wickes remain suspended at 40p, having almost halved last week on news of the accounting problems.

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# market report/shares

## DATA BANK

FT-SE 100  
3725.6+14.6

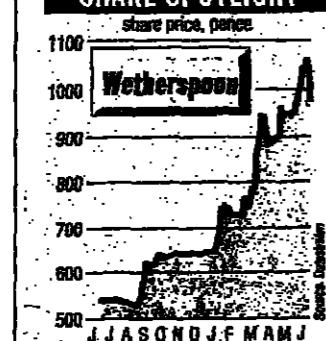
FT-SE 250  
4730.4+17.2

FT-SE 350  
1878.2+7.3

SEAO VOLUME  
606.9m shares,  
30,015 bargains

Gifts Index  
92.81 +0.25

## SHARE SPOTLIGHT



## Talk of action at Guinness revives investors' spirits

## TAKING STOCK

Guinness is once again intriguing the stock market. For a long while the shares drifted forlornly, weighed down by squeezed profits, the fierce competition in the spirits market and whether the group had the strength to push through much needed price increases.

Yet after edging perilously close to their 12-month low the shares have suddenly perked up; they climbed a further 5p to 475p, reawakening the suspicion corporate action could be near.

One suggestion is LVMH, the French group, wants to ditch its 20 per cent Guinness stake to allow chairman Bernard Arnault to concentrate on its traditional luxury baggage operations and develop a media empire.

To add to the ferment Guinness is thought to be itching to get its hands on all of Moet Hennessy, the Champagne and Cognac brandy house where it

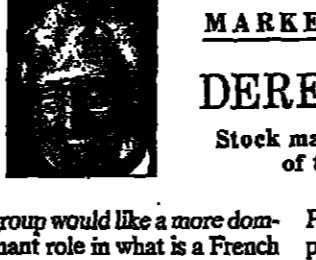
has a 34 per cent interest with LVMH owning the rest. There is also talk of a spirits deal with Allied Domecq.

Guinness and LVMH have endured an uneasy corporate relationship although there is no doubt that on trading grounds the association has reaped rich dividends.

It has been suggested that Guinness could not have infiltrated the French drink industry without the help of a softly-softly approach with LVMH.

Even now the prospect of a UK drinks giant taking a controlling interest in France's premiere luxury drinks group would produce a wave of outrage in the self centred French business community.

But there is little doubt the present relationship has served its second trading advantage in succession with the FT-SE 100 index reaching 3,725.6, a 14.6 points gain. After a long debilitating run



## MARKET REPORT

### DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

group would like a more dominant role in what is a French drinks associate.

The French entrepreneur has already cut his Guinness stake from 24 per cent to 20 per cent. Placing the remainder, in one swoop, would represent a Herculean task; yet nibbling off the shares would devastate the Guinness share price.

Certainly stronger Guiness shares could help the French group persuade the market to swallow another barrel of stuff.

The rest of the market enjoyed its second trading advantage in succession with the FT-SE 100 index reaching 3,725.6, a 14.6 points gain. After a long debilitating run

Footsie has recovered 47.3 points in two sessions. Volume was again uninspiring, indicating that the market swings and roundabouts were enjoying little more than the occasional gentle touch.

Scottish & Newcastle's result inspired a few drink shares to move ahead but the pub/restaurant groups continued to feel the squeeze as the market fretted about expansion problems. JD Wetherspoon lost 2p to 976p.

The non-brewing but pub owning Heavitree Brewery switched to AIM with the ordinary shares up 50p to 275p.

Wetherspoon's

stories of more deals with sug-

gestions Waste Management International wanted to sell its 19.7 per cent shareholding in Wessex Water leaving the shares 7.5p lower at 349.5p. Hyder lost 2p to 687p.

Betacom, seemingly destined to be Alan Sugar's next electronics vehicle, surged 14.5p to 29p. Others in the new Sugar equation did well. Amstrad gained 5p to 196p and Psoni jumped 6p to 410p.

ADT, the Bermuda-registered security systems group, surged 395p to 1,550p on the bid from a US group, Republic Industries. Automated Security, in receipt of a share exchange offer from ADT, gained 8p to 45p.

Boots, due to meet analysts, edged ahead 5p to 584p and Tomkins was unchanged at 253p. After the market closed Olivetti, the Italian giant, said it had cut its shareholding yet again.

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Independent British

Healthcare, due to make its AIM debut today, starts its stock market life under the shadow of the first major take over bid in the healthcare sector. Goldsborough, on the receiving end of a hostile £74m offer from the larger Westminster Health Care, has 21 per cent of IBH. The former business expansion scheme company lost £8.1m last year largely due to restructuring.

In the first half of this year it produced profits of £1m and should approach £2m for the year. The group, coming to market via an introduction, has more than 3,000 shareholders. The opening price is likely to be around 80p.

Deals in London & Edinburgh, the publisher, are expected to start next week. The shares have been priced at 10p, valuing the company at £4m.

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## Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (PE) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: Ex rights & ex dividend; E or U Unlisted Securities Market; S suspended; np Party Paid; N Nil Paid Shares; A AIM Stock

Source: FT Information

## The Independent Index

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## Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
Lloyds TS	150,000	NFC	80,000	Lucas	50,000	BP	40,000
British Gas	40,000	Vodafone	75,000	Gascoyne	50,000	BT	40,000
MTI	30,000	Lockheed	75,000	Anglo	50,000	Barclays	44,000
BT	20,000	BAE	70,000	Hammerson	50,000	HSBC	40,000
General Elect	20,000	ASDA Group	50,000	British Airways	40,000	Royal Insurance	40,000

FT-SE 100 Index hour by hour

Open	37,004 down 0.6	11.00 37,733 up 21	14.00 37,194 up 54
09.08 37,082 down 2.3	12.00 37,743 up 38	15.00 37,215 up 55	16.00 37,256 up 49
09.08 37,059 down 1.1	12.00 37,759 up 49	15.00 37,205 up 45	16.00 37,256 up 49

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## Investment Companies

### Health Care

### Household Goods

### Engineering

### Electronics

### Food Manufacturers

### Automotive

### Leisure & Hotels

### Leisure & Hotels

### Investment Trusts

### Household Goods

### Engineering

### Electronics

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### Household Goods

### Engineering

### Electronics

### Food Manufacturers

### Automotive

### Leisure & Hotels

### Leisure & Hotels

### Investment Trusts

### Household Goods</h3

# Don't let policy errors lead to a return to old ways

ECONOMIC VIEW  
HAMISH McRAE

Let's assume that they have indeed made a policy error, and ask how much it matters.

We do not yet know that the authorities have yet again relaxed policy at just the wrong point in the cycle, but the balance of probability is shifting that way. The evidence is steadily mounting that monetary policy is being eased at the moment when the economy is about to put on another spurt of growth.

Yesterday's figures showed a jump in money supply, the Nationwide reported a jump in house prices, and a rise in the purchasing managers' index. While consumer spending was down from the high levels of April, there is still a lot of drive there. And all this comes against a background of a looser-than-intended fiscal policy, for the fiscal deficit is falling more slowly than expected because of low tax receipts, and a still weak sterling.

So there is clear evidence that by the autumn there will be, if not a consumer boom, certainly a boomer. Last week we learnt that real personal disposable income is growing at the fastest rate since 1989. While the first half of this year and the second half of last saw relatively slow growth, just about everyone expects growth to pick up in the second half - driven by consumers. Yet the Chancellor persists in driving down interest rates, almost certainly (though we will have to wait until the minutes are published) against the advice of the Bank of England.

Of course, as always in economics, there are counter-signals. The continental European recovery, important for exports, is still precarious. Manufacturing here is still depressed, partly as a result of that. The warning signals that might have indicated a surge in inflation, like rising pay



awards, are not there. The balance of payments last year, thanks to revisions announced last week, is so close to balance that it hardly matters. If it were not for payments by the Government to the European Union, we would be in surplus. Nevertheless, the balance of evidence points in one direction: that policy probably ought to be being tightened now, rather than the reverse.

Does it matter? There are three main areas of potential damage: the two well-known pressure points in the UK economy of inflation and the balance of payments; then there is the possible structural damage to the economy.

Inflation first. Anyone trying to kindle fears of renewed inflation has to

in interest rates that would take place as a result of inflationary pressures.

Looking around now there are quite clear signs of a burst of inflation in asset prices but far fewer of signs of a surge in the price of current goods and services. One rise of asset prices is very evident: the quite strong performance of shares, though political worries have held the UK market back against Wall Street. The other place to look, house prices, is now at last beginning to point in the same direction. The graph of the left from the Halifax, showing the possible rise in house prices through the next couple of years, suggests that while there will be no return to the late 1980s, we will see the strongest

performance in eight years. House prices were, in the last cycle, an important force stimulating consumer demand in a several ways. People borrowed against the spare equity in their homes and used the money to maintain or increase their living standards. When they moved houses, they tended to buy more kit to put into the new home. And the confidence induced by knowing that they were becoming rich through home ownership probably affected their spending.

House prices were, in the last cycle, an important force stimulating consumer demand in a several ways. People borrowed against the spare equity in their homes and used the money to maintain or increase their living standards. When they moved houses, they tended to buy more kit to put into the new home. And the confidence induced by knowing that they were becoming rich through home ownership probably affected their spending.

ing in other ways.

The other answer is to point to a rise in asset price inflation fed through to general inflation. The key question is whether, assuming there will indeed be a solid performance in asset prices, the rise in asset prices feed through to general ones. I think, though I may be wrong, that it won't, at least to any great extent. Why?

There are two ways of answering this. One, a general answer, is to point to the perceived insecurity of most people, insecurity about their jobs, about UK politics, about the EU, about competition from low-wage East Asian countries and so on. Leave aside whether this perception is justified or not. That is not relevant. What matters is whether it exists, and it is hard to deny that something is different from the late 1980s. Look at the way expectations by industry of price increases have fallen over the last year. That really does not suggest that there will be a surge in producer prices and if producer prices do not come up it is hard to see retail prices doing the same.

As a result house price inflation fed through to general inflation. The key question is whether, assuming there will indeed be a solid performance in asset prices, the rise in asset prices feed through to general ones. I think, though I may be wrong, that it won't, at least to any great extent. Why?

What about the current account? It is all right. A current account deficit last year of £25bn is, in effect, a current account in balance because the deficit is smaller than the margins of error in the calculation. Further, the stock of net overseas assets seems to

have continued to rise in the first quarter of this year, so both the country's "profit and loss" and its "balance sheet" are fine. True, this consumer boom has yet to get under way, but if there were a serious potential problem here we would surely be seeing something of it by now.

Given the traditional delight British consumers show the moment they are feeling a little flush more, in rushing out and buying foreign consumer goods, the threat of an unsustainable import boom should always be a concern. But there is no evidence yet that this is taking place.

So, even if policy is too loose at the moment, there is a decent case to be made that it does not matter too much. Come next year, policy can always be tightened. The climate of in-

security means that the penalty for a mistake is much smaller than it would have otherwise been.

But there may be another worry. Loose monetary policy, low interest rates and in particular a mini-boom in house prices, will encourage a revival of the 1970s and 1980s attitude that people became rich by owning houses, rather than by working hard and earning a good income, and saving from that. This will be particularly encouraged if taxation on earned income, and income from savings, rises after the election.

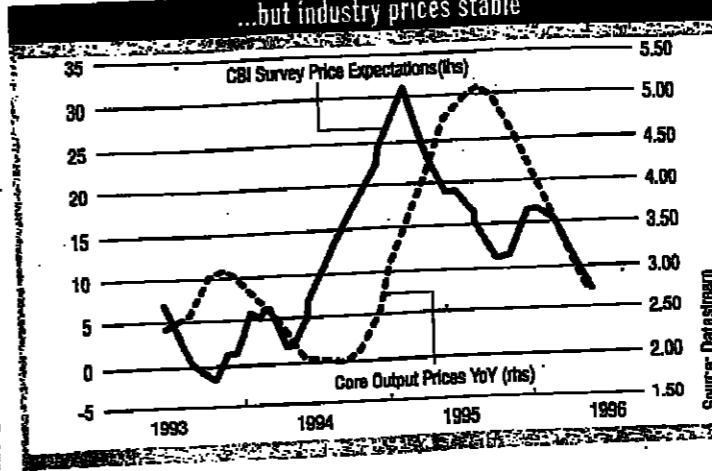
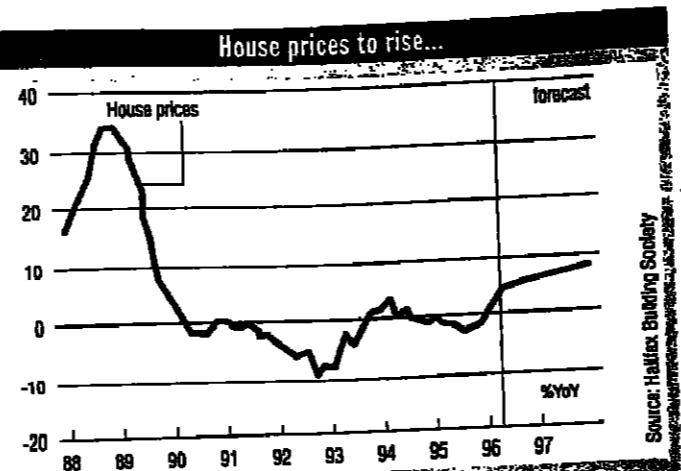
Thus a rise in asset prices would be damaging, not so much because it would feed through into a rise in consumer prices, but damaging in its own right. Seen in this light, the policy error which now may well be happening is not so much a catastrophe on the scale of the late 1980s. But it is more likely a bit of a pity because it will encourage too many of us to go back to the "better a borrower than a saver" attitudes that we need to dump.

## By the autumn there will be, if not a consumer boom, then certainly a boomer

crying wolf. For the last four years, ever since sterling was ejected from the Exchange Rate Mechanism in face, inflation has pretty consistently come in lower than forecast. Nearly everyone then predicted that the depreciation of sterling would feed through into higher prices. Wrong. It didn't. The Bank of England forecasts have almost invariably over-estimated the inflation out-turn, but the Bank is in good company for the markets have invariably over-estimated their spending.

House prices were, in the last cycle, an important force stimulating consumer demand in a several ways. People borrowed against the spare equity in their homes and used the money to maintain or increase their living standards. When they moved houses, they tended to buy more kit to put into the new home. And the confidence induced by knowing that they were becoming rich through home ownership probably affected their spending.

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Source: Halifax, Building Society, CBI, *Business Survey*

Source: Halifax

## Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark
US	1558.5	5.3	9.6	10.00	-	1558.4	5.3	9.6	10.00
Canada	22.00	11.3	50.37	53.27	-	22.00	11.3	50.37	53.27
Germany	23.70	14.0	13.0	15.25	-	23.70	14.0	13.0	15.25
France	8.076	13.2	35.83	35.25	-	8.076	13.2	35.83	35.25
Italy	23.63	4.83	12.0	15.25	-	23.63	4.83	12.0	15.25
Japan	17.07	7.5	22.5	22.5	-	17.07	7.5	22.5	22.5
ECU	12.03	1.11	2.25	2.25	-	12.03	1.11	2.25	2.25
Belgium	48.78	12.7	32.5	32.5	-	48.78	12.7	32.5	32.5
Netherlands	9.323	15.9	42.25	42.25	-	9.323	15.9	42.25	42.25
Ireland	1.028	2.3	2.3	2.3	-	1.028	2.3	2.3	2.3
Spain	5.42	2.31	6.6	6.6	-	5.42	2.31	6.6	6.6
Sweden	10.33	0.4	1.9	1.9	-	10.33	0.4	1.9	1.9
Australia	19.31	20.31	67.55	67.55	-	19.31	20.31	67.55	67.55
Hong Kong	12.02	10.1	22.4	22.4	-	12.02	10.1	22.4	22.4
Malaysia	35.770	0.9	0.9	0.9	-	35.770	0.9	0.9	0.9
New Zealand	2.770	4.57	13.56	14.56	-	2.770	4.57	13.56	14.56
Saudi Arabia	5.549	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	5.549	0.0	0.0	0.0
Singapore	2.952	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	2.952	0.0	0.0	0.0

Forward rates quoted right to left at a discount: subtract from spot rate to add to spot rate

\*Dollar rates are not as accurate as forward rates

For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 9033.

Calls cost 3p per minute (cheap rate) 48p other times.

## Interest Rates

Country	Syr	5yr	10yr	yield %	Country	Syr	5yr	10yr	yield %
UK	5.75%	Discount	2.50%	1.5%	US	5.75%	Discount	0.75%	0.50%
Bass	4.50%	Discount	4.50%	1.5%	Prime	5.00%	Discount	2.50%	2.50%
France	3.60%	Discount	3.50%	1.5%	Spain	5.25%	Discount	3.30%	3.30%
Italy	8.00%	Discount	5.00%	1.5%	Central	7.00%	Discount	7.25%	7.25%
Japan	5.00%	Discount	4.50%	1.5%	Switzerland	15.0%	Discount	15.0%	15.0%
Denmark	2.60%	Discount	3.25%	1.5%	Denmark	6.00%	Repo (Av)	6.00%	6.00%

Source calculated on basis of latest rates

## Bond Yields

Country	Syr	5yr	10yr	yield %	Country	Syr	5yr	10yr	yield %
UK	7.75%	7.75%	7.75%	7.75%	Netherlands	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%
US	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Spain	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
France	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Italy	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Germany	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Central	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Japan	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Switzerland	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Denmark	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Denmark	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Ireland	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Denmark	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Sweden	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Denmark	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Australia	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Denmark	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%
Malaysia	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	10.25%	Denmark	10.25%	10.25%	10.25	

# Sport



Linford Christie, in Knightsbridge yesterday, finally ends speculation about his participation in the Olympic Games

Photograph: Peter Jay

## Hill drives towards title with grand prix wins record in sight

### Motor racing

DERICK ALLSOP  
reports from Magny-Cours

Next stop Silverstone and all sorts of possibilities are opening up for Damon Hill. Not only the prospect of the world title drawing nearer, but also another landmark en route to a possible record number of wins in a season and the chance to make amends for the shambles of last year's British Grand Prix.

Hill's comfortable victory in the French Grand Prix here takes him to Silverstone or Sunday week 25 points clear of his Williams-Renault teammate, Jacques Villeneuve, and 37 ahead of the reigning champion, Michael Schumacher. Williams should again be out on their own, probably even further out, on their home track and another 10 points beckon for the Englishman.

Hill has six wins already this year and, with seven races remaining, the opportunity and momentum to equal or even better the record of nine, which is shared by his compatriot, Nigel Mansell, and Germany's Schumacher.

Villeneuve was again a well-beaten second here, and appears incapable of generating a genuine threat to his partner, Benetton-Renault's Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger, third and fourth here on Sunday, remain even further off the pace, so it still falls to Schumacher to challenge his old adversary and give Formula One a desperately needed shot in the arm.

Hill, too, ought to welcome the chance to beat Schumacher, especially at the Northamptonshire circuit. He won there somewhat fortuitously two years ago after the first of Schumacher's clashes with the authorities.

Twelve months ago it was the

two drivers who collided and Hill was widely condemned for his ill-judged assault. His embarrassment was compounded by reports that his boss, Frank Williams, had apologised to Benetton and described his driver as "a prat".

That incident and its consequences have ranked with Hill ever since. He had Schumacher on the ropes but knows he was in too much of a rush to finish him. He does not, however, believe he was entirely responsible for taking both of them out of the race. Victory this time would be all the sweeter.

Schumacher would undoubtedly welcome a race with Hill. The two grands prix since his momentous win in Spain have been laughable. On Sunday he had not reached the grid when his engine blew. He managed to contain his anger, but in Italy the team were under siege from the critics. "Ferrari,

another disaster," screamed one headline. Others conveyed much the same sentiment.

Luca di Montezemolo, the Ferrari president, who squirmed through the latest débâcle back in Italy, mustered a rallying call: "The team are serious and have the means to solve the problem. The most important thing is to remain united."

Then, by way of a public comment and presumably a warning to his charges, he added: "I shall be at Silverstone and as many races as possible from now on."

Long-tormented Ferrari fans are not the only Formula One followers hoping Montezemolo can provide Schumacher with the competitive and reliable car he seeks. Without it the championship will tail off to its dream, as well as inevitable, conclusion, and even Hill might find the satisfaction diminished.

## The victory allows me to enjoy Silverstone a little bit more

From the moment I won last Sunday's French Grand Prix, I was bombarded with statistics. It was the 50th win for Williams-Renault and it seems that I have now scored more championship points than my Dad. Also, in winning my 19th Grand Prix in 60 starts, my hit rate is apparently pretty impressive when it comes to examining the records.

That's all very well – and I must admit it is satisfying in a way to have reached the various landmarks – but my main concern above all else remains the 1996 World Championship. Of more immediate importance is the fourth one-two of the season for Rothmans Williams-Renault and my sixth win this year. When it comes to statistics, I should also say that I bucked recent trends in France. For the past three years I had taken pole position and never won the race. So this year I tried a different tactic by qualifying second, and it worked.

If grand prix racing can ever be described as easy then this ranked as one of the easier ones, but I had no idea it was going to turn out that way when I joined Michael Schumacher on the front row of the grid. I was eyeing Michael's Ferrari and taking a look at how much wing he was running, trying to work out the tactics he was going to adopt.

While I was doing that, I was reminding myself that I would need to watch out for Jean Alesi, who had been third-fastest in his Benetton-Renault. There was the thought that he could try and attack going into the hairpin on the first lap. Also, I was wondering what to do if, say, Schumacher managed to maintain his advantage into the first corner. In that case, I would have to tuck under his rear wing and maybe attempt a pass at the hairpin. On the other hand, if I could get the jump on the Ferrari, I felt reasonably confident I could stay in the lead. At no stage in my planning did I even begin to contemplate what would actually happen.

We set off on the warm-up lap and, half-way round, the engine on Michael's car



DAMON HILL

simply blew up. It started blowing out oil and smoke and I knew he was out of the French Grand Prix before we had even reached the start. My immediate concern was to avoid spinning off on the oil which was spewing from the back of the Ferrari. But, needless to say, I immediately realised the consequences of this went not only for my race-winning chances, but also for the championship.

I think about it after the race, a part of me felt that I would have liked to race against Schumacher – it certainly would have spiced up the race – but I'm happy to take it any way it comes. I knew that it was very rare to get such a lucky break and it was essential that I capitalise on it.

Alesi did not prove to be a problem and I was able to maintain a reasonable lead over the Benetton. But I was receiving messages that my team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, was going quickly. Sure enough, when he took second place from Alesi, he began to close in just as the time when I was having trouble with one or two back-markers. I had to put the hammer down after that and stabilise the gap. The pit stops went very well and I was able to make them as and when I needed. We started out with a flexible plan which we were ready to adopt to suit whatever happened in the anticipated battle with Schumacher but, in the end, I more or less ran the race as I pleased.

As far as the championship is concerned, it mustn't be forgotten that two non-finishes in races won by Jacques will bring him to within five points of my total. It's not over yet by any means, and Jacques is getting quicker all the time.

I think the single most impressive thing about the weekend was the performance of the Renault engines, as they powered the first four finishers. Renault had introduced their latest engine, and to achieve such incredible reliability is a great tribute to their engineers. That added to the pleasure of my win; in fact, the statistics also tell me that I have won more races for Renault than any other driver.

The Renault chairman, Mr Louis Schweizer, was present for his home grand prix and he was very complimentary when we spoke after the race. In a way it seemed a bit strange, particularly in the light of Renault's announcement last week that they will quit grand prix racing at the end of 1997.

When Renault made the statement, I was asked how the decision would affect my plans for 1997. I said at the time it may have some bearing on what I do next year – which is true, because nobody is quite sure how the law will lie in 1997 and beyond.

However, I want to make it clear that my goal this season is to win the championship and, if I can do that, then my ambition is to continue racing next year with Williams and Renault, and carry the No 1 on their car.

My more immediate plan, of course, is to win the British Grand Prix in two weeks' time. A victory at Silverstone would be a fairy-tale result as far as I'm concerned.

© Damon Hill Grand Prix Ltd

## Christie goes for Atlanta treble

### Athletics

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

Linford Christie will, after all, defend his Olympic 100 metres title this month. Yesterday's long-awaited announcement, reversing the position he adopted in an emotional televised appearance in June of last year, is unlikely to come as a major surprise to any of his Atlanta rivals, several of whom had predicted such a decision.

But, as so often with this man, there was an element of the unexpected in his assertion that he would be doubling up over 200m, as well as doing the relay.

"If Michael Johnson can double up, why not me?" he said with a grin. For his last Olympics, it seems, it was all or nothing.

Christie, who has spent most of this season dodging The Question with varying degrees of tolerance, was clearly relieved to have settled upon a decision which, he insisted, was still uncertain going into Sunday's 100m race in Gateshead. So much so that he even began the press conference by jokingly pretending that he was announcing a further week's delay before making his decision.

He cited a variety of reasons for his change of heart, chief of which was the reaction of the public. He had letters all the time, "I even had one asking me if I was playing in Euro 96. The public have been great. They are the people who have made me what I am," he said.

Another of whom that is true, his long-time coach, Ron Rod-

dan, also figured influentially.

"Every time I want to retire he says 'one more year, one more year,'" Christie said. "I have been hanging out because I know that once I go, Ron will go. And that would be a great loss to the sport. I think Ron is going to be the biggest loss because of his vast knowledge."

Christie's shoe company, Puma, had included him in their pre-Olympic publicity material, but he denied that any commercial pressures had influenced his choice of action.

"I'm in the sport because I enjoy it," he said. "Contrary to what a lot of people think, I don't run for the money."

He is confident of his chances going into Atlanta. "I think I'm better than I was four years ago," he said. "I ran 9.96 in Barcelona, but I don't think 9.96 is going to get me a medal. I think I'm capable of going a lot quicker."

Despite that, he did not go along with the suggestion that the Atlanta opposition could be the toughest he has yet faced. "I'm in the sport because I enjoy it," he said. "I think I'm better than I was four years ago," he said. "I ran 9.96 in Barcelona, but I don't think 9.96 is going to get me a medal. I think I'm capable of going a lot quicker."

Did he, someone asked, believe there was a moral obligation for a champion to defend his title if possible? "If you don't feel you are capable of doing it then, well, in this world we have a choice, and it's up to each individual champion to make that choice. If you don't feel you can go out and do justice to yourself and your country, then you have that choice not to go."

But he denied the suggestion that his delay had been influenced by worries about the kind of injury which brought him literally down to earth at last year's World Championships in Gothenburg, where he finished the final race down with a hamstring injury.

"If I'm going to get injured, I'm going to get injured," he said. "As an athlete you always have pain, you always have problems. But if it's going to go, it's going to go."

And so it he. Less than a week after England's Wembley disappointment, it was good to see a result going the home way.

Christie's name was among those added to the British team before the deadline of midnight on Sunday. As expected, Steve Backley and Jonathan Edwards also had their places confirmed.

Paul Evans has been granted his wish to switch from the marathon to the 10,000m. Evans withdrew from the marathon because he did not want to spend six weeks away from home training and acclimatising at a time when he was worried about a family illness.

His positive victory over 5,000m at Gateshead on Sunday told in his favour. The selectors also looked kindly on sprint hurdler Jacqui Agyepong, who found it hard going in her first major race after an Achilles tendon injury at Gateshead, but who has been rewarded for her past record. Craig Winnrow has been given the third 800m place alongside Curtis Robb and David Strang after beating both of them on Sunday.

## Woodhall critical of King

### Boxing

Richie Woodhall's attempt to win the World Boxing Council middleweight title in Las Vegas later this month is on the brink of being scrapped.

The League's chief executive will face an increasingly querulous membership of the decision-making Rugby League Council at Wigan tomorrow afternoon. More than half-way through the first summer season, most of them are asking what on earth can be done to put things right.

The problem is not the quality of the game. There have been as many memorable matches as ever, but Super League and summer rugby is not working. Clubs who believed that simply switching to warmer weather would bring extra supporters through the turnstiles have been swiftly disbanded.

Woodhall has refused to meet the demand. "I haven't worked as hard as I have to get into this position just to sign my life away with someone like Don King. Everything was agreed ages ago, but now King is saying that he never agreed to anything. He is bad news and it's really terrible."

"It's less than two weeks to the fight now so I can't really see it going ahead, and my manager, Mickey Duff, has told me that it's 95 per cent certain to be off." Duff has tried repeatedly to resolve the situation and last week he wrote an eight-page letter to the WBC president, Jose Sulaiman, listing his concerns. There has been no response from the WBC.

The Cuban boxing squad for the Atlanta Olympics has been weakened by the defection of two medal hopes. Joel Casamayor, the bantamweight gold medal winner from the Barcelona Games, and Ramon Garibay, the national light-heavyweight champion, fled the Cuban Olympic training camp in Guadalajara, Mexico, last week. They are now being held at the United States Immigration and Naturalisation Detention Centre in San Ysidro, California, where their case for asylum is being presented by a local attorney.

The loss of Casamayor ruins Cuba's plans to field an unprecedented four reigning Olympic champions in Atlanta. His defection to the US had been expected for some time by the Cuban authorities. Casamayor has been a notable absentee from Cuban squads visiting the US in recent years, although he has been a regular at other international tournaments.

The Welsh Rugby Union officially turned down the satellite television company's £40.5m offer, which means only England have accepted a deal, worth £87.5m over five years.

"We were offered twice as much as Scotland (£20m) and Ireland (£18m) in an attempt to break us up," the WRU chairman Vernon Pugh, said. "There is no way we will abandon them because to do so would be to abandon ourselves."

"We are not negotiating with Sky because there are too many conditions attached to their money. It is not up to them to say how we should spend the money and there were other provisions which no sensible governing body would accept."

"We were being asked to surrender control of the game in Wales and there was also the consideration that England were offered more than the other

## Lindsay faces up to a summer of discontent

### Dave Hadfield reports on the growing calls for an about-turn on Super League

If a game can be worse off for the injection, albeit drip-fed, of £87.5m, then rugby league is.

Even with virtually nothing happening to improve the dreadful state of many grounds, clubs extra overheads are running their hand-outs.

Among the solutions which will be mooted will be reverting to two divisions of 16 teams each. Others favour two 15s, with the last four clubs in the Second Division cast out.

There are bright spots. Bradford Bulls have built on the enthusiasm stirred by their trip to Wembley, and there is a genuine buzz on summer matchdays at Olds and London and Paris.

Woodhall has refused to meet the demand. "I haven't worked as hard as I have to get into this position just to sign my life away with someone like Don King. Everything was agreed ages ago, but now King is saying that he never agreed to anything. He is bad news and it's really terrible."

But attendances elsewhere, even using figures which often look inflated to seasoned observers, are alarming. The two big-chip operations, Wigan and Leeds, are struggling along with averages averaging less than the last, lame-duck winter season; others would kill even for those modest crowds.

What the existing Super League clubs want is basically

to go through with what they talk of privately, will press for something more radical. They will urge a return to a winter season for the First and Second Divisions, if not the whole of the league.

That is how quickly disillusionment with summer rugby has set in. Sunday night matches have proved a miserable flop, but there is no guarantee that switching to Sunday afternoons or Friday nights will be any better.

Perhaps the public, despite all the hype, really does not want rugby league in the summer.

Lindsay's argument is that this is a uniquely difficult summer with Euro 96 et al. But looking at the sporting timetable for the next few summers makes them all look rather difficult.

That is not to say that it is impossible to make a go of the change of seasons, merely that the league and its members will have to go about it far better than they have, in general, so far.

They can make a move in that direction by admitting South Wales and pledging to spend far more of their windfall on improving stadia than on creating one very well-paid team.

What the existing Super League clubs want is basically

to go through with what they talk of privately, will press for something more radical. They will urge a return to a winter season for the First and Second Divisions, if not the whole of the league.

Rugby is entering an exciting era and I am looking forward to being involved," Deshayes said. "One of my major tasks is to ensure that club rugby achieves a very significant market share in the coming seasons and I am confident that that objective can be met."

"I would like to stress that I see Epru's future as working with the RFU for the greater good of the sport. Although Epru represents the leading clubs, we are also very mindful of the needs of all in the game and I anticipate a harmonious and business-like working relationship with the RFU."

The left-winger Justin Swart, is set to make his debut for the world champions, South Africa, when they meet Fiji for the first time at Test level in Pretoria on Tuesday. Swart, 23, steps in after Pieter Hendricks reported on Monday morning.

### Rugby Union

England are almost certain to be cast out of the Five Nations' Championship after Wales joined Ireland and Scotland in rejecting a deal with Sky TV.

The Welsh Rugby Union officially turned down the satellite television company's £40.5m offer, which means only England have accepted a deal, worth £87.5m over five years.

"We were offered twice as much as Scotland (£20m) and Ireland (£18m) in an attempt to break us up," the WRU chairman Vernon Pugh, said. "There is no way we will abandon them because to do so would be to abandon ourselves."

"We are not negotiating with Sky because there are too many conditions attached to their money. It is not up to them to say how we should spend the money and there were other provisions which no sensible governing body would accept."





Steffi Graf (left) serves to Martina Hingis during the German's straight-sets win on Centre Court at Wimbledon yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

## Sanchez finds her lines just in time

RICHARD EDMONDSON

When the television has exploded or your flight has been cancelled again, one of the great parlour games is to come up with the names of famous Belgians.

The qualifiers (cut around the dotted line for future use) usually include Eddy Merckx, René Magritte, Georges Simenon, Maurice Maeterlinck and, granted lenient playing partners, Hercule Poirot. Yesterday was the chance for Sabine Appelmans to join the celebrity band.

The 24-year-old was the first Belgian in the fourth round since 1975 and was bidding to

become the first from her nation to make the quarter-finals in the Open era. Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, the No 4 seed, was in the way.

Certainly they don't sell Appelmans short in Belgium itself. *Panorama* magazine nominated her as the globe's "Ideal Woman", placing her ahead of a quartet who are pretty much interchangeable: Claudia Schiffer, Sharon Stone, Michelle Pfeiffer and Pamela Anderson.

This Flanders loyalty to their girl is reward for Appelmans' own faithfulness. As a youngster she went to a tennis camp with a friend and stuck with her even though it meant joining a group for left-handers. She has been a southpaw ever since.

Yesterday's was always going to be a different discipline for Appelmans. In the third round she disposed of Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, who is about as mobile as Ayers Rock, but now she faced the circuit's greatest scoundrel. "It is true that the match was a lot different than against Schultz-McCarthy," she said.

"Against her we had very short rallies, but today there were some long rallies and I had to give a lot of energy."

What did surprise the Belgian, however, was her opponent's approach. In their previous five encounters (all of which had gone to the Spaniard), Sanchez Vicario had started pugnaciously and retreated to a percentage game only if things had started going

wrong. Despite the success of this formula, Sanchez Vicario had not sent the form book the same way as well.

The Spaniard sank into a self-destructive trance early on. When matters are going awry, Sanchez Vicario tends to dispute line calls in her own distinguishable manner, stopping dead still in a variety of postures as if frozen in disbelief. For the first set and the beginning of the second, Court One resembled Madame Tussauds as Appelmans forged 6-3, 2-0 lead.

At that point a little man appeared in Sanchez Vicario's head and crashed the cymbals together. She immediately twitched back to life, breaking

both Appelmans' serve and stranglehold. "At 2-0 down I went more for my shots and I started being a little more aggressive and I broke her serve," the Spaniard said. "After that I got more confident and I started playing my own game, like I should have been from the beginning."

Appelmans also noted that her opponent appeared to have been plugged into the southern grid. "After 2-0 she hit the ball harder and did not make mistakes any more," she said. "I had a feeling that I had to do something special because I was hitting good balls and she was bringing everything back." Just over 30 minutes later it was all over, Sanchez Vicario steaming to a 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 victory.

Appelmans' post-mortem sounded like a rehearsed loser's speech. It is doubtful she had considered a different result. "It has been a very good week. I did not expect to do so well here," she said. "I have been playing well every match so no regrets and I think it was a good week."

Now that she has extricated herself from this web, Sanchez Vicario quite likes her prospects. "I've had tough matches, but I'm feeling confident and I've been playing a little better every match," she said. "Today's match helped me because losing one set and coming back gives you good confidence. I'm glad to have a tough match and handle it very well at the end."

### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

#### Men's singles

Holder: P Sampras (US)

Fourth round

T Henman (GB) bt M Gustafsson (Swe) 6-2 7-6

J Stoltenberg (Aus) bt J Hasek (Swe) 6-2 7-6

Third round

G FERNANDEZ (US) and N ZVEREVA bt N

Bartoli and R McQuillan (Aus) 6-2 6-3

P D SMYLY (Aus) and L M Wild (US) bt L M

RAYMOND (Aus) and R P Stubbs (Aus) 6-4

7-5

Second round

T WOODBRIDGE and M WOODFORDE (Aus) bt

J Grab and R Rosenberg (US) 6-2 6-3

B MacPhee (US) and M Teletz (Aus) bt P GAL

BRATH (US) and A Osho (Aus) (6-3 6-4

6-4)

First round

N Dechy (Fr) bt K Trcka (Swe) 4-6 6-3 6-3

S GRAF (Ger) bt M HINGIS (Swe) 6-1 6-4

J K Wieser (Aus) bt A Frazer (US) 6-4 6-4

M PENCE (Fr) bt E Likhovtseva (Rus) 6-2 6-3

Seeded players in CAPITALS

Yesterdays

Men's doubles

Holder: T Woodbridge and M Wood-

ford (Aus)

Third round

T WOODBRIDGE and M WOODFORDE (Aus) bt

J Grab and R Rosenberg (US) 6-2 6-3

B MacPhee (US) and M Teletz (Aus) bt P GAL

BRATH (US) and A Osho (Aus) (6-3 6-4

6-4)

Mixed doubles

Holder: J Stark and M Navratilova (Us)

Second round

R Borch (Swe) and K Pe (Us) 6-3 7-6

S GRAF (Ger) and M HINGIS (Swe) 6-1 6-4

J K Wieser (Aus) bt A Frazer (US) 6-4 6-4

M PENCE (Fr) bt E Likhovtseva (Rus) 6-2 6-3

Seeded players in CAPITALS

Yesterdays

Women's singles

Holder: S Graf (Ger)

Fourth round

G FERNANDEZ (US) and N ZVEREVA bt N

Bartoli and R McQuillan (Aus) 6-2 6-3

P D SMYLY (Aus) and L M Wild (US) 6-2 6-3

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Yesterdays

Mixed doubles

Holder: J Stark and M Navratilova (Us)

Second round

R Borch (Swe) and K Pe (Us)

## German epic tale of beer halls and Bierhoff

Fans celebrate Germany's coming home in riotous style.  
**Imre Karacs**  
reports from Bonn

"Football is coming home," crowed Germany's media yesterday, twisting the knife in England's wounds by usurping the *Euro 96* slogan. After six lean years, Berti Vogts' first major trophy as manager of the national squad was delivered to the fans shortly after noon.

The plane had been inexplicably delayed, like the winning goal in the final, but for the crowds on the tarmac it was worth waiting for. One by one the shattered players limped down the steps, goalie Andreas Köpke carrying the silverware, followed by the hobbling figure of Dieter Eilts, whose knee had turned rigid during Sunday's match.

Jürgen Klinsmann and company wore sober suits and sported a sober demeanour – no complaints from Lufthansa so far. But some of the fans had gone a long way towards emulating their English rivals in the previous night's wild celebrations. Riots erupted in several cities after Oliver Bierhoff scored his "golden goal".

In Düsseldorf, Essen and Berlin, intoxicated fans peleted police with bottles. In the depressed town of Herne in the Ruhr, they looted shops and overturned cars. One wonders what might have happened if Germany had lost.

Most fans admitted that on the night Germany had played poorly, and were a whisker away from defeat. "Great result, lovely play" was one typical comment. "Kaiser" Franz Beck-



German fans take their European Championship jubilation on to the streets of Munich

July 1996

enbauer, remembered for his style as much as his winning ways, did not hide his disappointment: "The German team were a long way from playing the most beautiful football," he said. "But they played efficiently."

There was, fortunately, one beautiful moment to savour in the 95th minute: Klinsmann's pass, Bierhoff's twisting and turning, the strike, and then the ball's slow journey off the keeper's hands across the line that appeared to last an eternity. The German television commentator was caught speechless. "Bierhoff shoots... Oh, Germany are European champions," he shouted seconds later, his voice betraying total disbelief.

That was the signal for throaty renditions of "We are the champions" in every *bierkeller* in the country. Fortified by alcohol, thousands spilled into the streets, defying Germany's strict laws on silence after 10pm.

Cars hooted their horns in the Ku'damm, Berlin's main shopping street; fans packed the central square of Dortmund, home to the *Bundesliga* champions for the second successive season, and the beer halls of Munich stayed open till the early hours.

Thousands more were waving flags yesterday at Frankfurt's main square, the Römer, to welcome the conquering heroes. Frankfurt had yearned for suc-

cess more than any other town.

Eintracht, one of the founders of the *Bundesliga*, were relegated at the end of last season, their failure due in no small measure to soft goals let in by their keeper, Köpke.

The entire city yesterday appeared to have congregated in front of the red-brick town hall. Somebody had misplaced the trophy, but the team provided plenty of entertainment, probably more than during the final's 95 minutes and the heart-stopping 120 minutes against England.

Klinsmann orchestrated the fixture, as he had done in the past three weeks. Grabbing the microphone on the balcony, he set off: "It's coming home, it's coming home." With that over, the bottles were finally opened, and the players went inside to be congratulated by dignitaries.

All this was broadcast live on television. ZDF, the second channel, had thrown out its schedule, devoting the entire day to replays, commentary, interviews and in-depth reporting of the homecoming.

Politicians jostled to bask in the glory, led by Helmut Kohl. Any suspicions that the corporatist Chancellor's knowledge of football was somewhat limited were dispelled by his forecast. Mr Kohl had correctly predicted the final score, although he had failed to budget for extra time.

Klinsmann orchestrated the fixture, as he had done in the past three weeks. Grabbing the microphone on the balcony, he set off: "It's coming home,

it's coming home." Kelly said.

England has launched its bid to bring the World Cup home in 2006 after the triumph of *Euro 96*, both on and off the field, convinced the Football Association to rival Germany for the right to stage the tournament, last held in this country in 1966.

"It's the next logical step for us," Graham Kelly, the FA chief executive, said yesterday. "No body can question any longer our ability to stage the biggest sporting events in the world."

Lennart Johansson, president of the governing body of European football, Uefa, impressed by "a new spirit of tolerance" in the last three weeks with Kelly yesterday to discuss England's candidature.

The first battle will be to persuade Germany, World Cup hosts in 1998, to step aside and concentrate instead on the European Championship in 2004.

"One of our earliest actions will be to speak to the German FA and advise them that we are

have wanted more than £750,000."

He has also been trailing Czech Republic's Petr Kouba, but the 27-year-old goalkeeper is likely to join the Spanish club Deportivo La Coruña.

Aston Villa, seeking cover for Gary Charles, who has a broken ankle, yesterday confirmed their interest in Sporting Lisbon's Portuguese international full-back, Fernando Nelson, who could cost them £1.5m.

The Scotland defender Tom Boyd has signed a new five-year contract with Celtic. Boyd had delayed signing until after *Euro 96*.

McGhee thought he had picked up a bargain. "If I had sold him at Reading, I would

Oldham have rejected an offer of £200,000 from Everton for the £1m-rated Chris Makin, the former England Under 21 full-back who is out of contract at Boundary Park.

Stoke are considering an offer of £450,000 from Sheffield United for the former Portsmouth defender Lee Sandford.

Nigel Spackman is leaving Chelsea to join Sheffield United as Howard Kendall's right-hand man. Kendall has been looking for a new assistant since Adrian Heath left for the hot seat at Burnley.

Newcastle United could yet build their planned 80,000-capacity stadium in the city itself rather than move to Gateshead. The Premier club have hinted they could leave St James' Park, their home since 1892 but which they say is too small to meet the demand for tickets, and move across the River Tyne.

Newcastle councillors keen to keep the Magpies in their home city have formulated a plan to allow the club to use land that the public has had access to for centuries. Under the proposal, the club build a new stadium, ice rink and retail facilities on open land and parkland at Castle Leazes, adjacent to St James' Park, which holds 36,500.

Sunderland have borrowed £6m which will guarantee the completion of the club's new stadium. The NWS Bank, a subsidiary of the Bank of Scotland, has agreed a loan repayable over 10 years with the club.

Promoted to the Premiership, the club now has the £15m it needs to build on the banks of the river Wear a stadium that will eventually have a 40,000 capacity. The new site is less than a mile from their present ground, Roker Park, and the stadium should be ready for the start of the 1997-98 season.

## England campaign to host 2006 World Cup

Entering the arena," Kelly said. "Uefa will not want a split European vote which could let in Africa or South America so they will try to broker the sort of compromise which in 1990 saw France take the 1998 World Cup while England hosted *Euro 96*.

With Belgium and the Netherlands hosting the next European Championship, and Japan and Korea awarded the 2002 World Cup, there has been much talk of a joint bid with Scotland or Wales. helped by National Lottery funds but Kelly ruled that out at this stage. "With all due respect to Scotland, I don't really want to go down that road."

There was the added boost yesterday of the Government promising its backing for the bid. Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, told the Commons that ministers would support an offer from the Football Association "in every way possible".

County Championship: Yorkshire return to the top of the table with 10 minutes to spare as the weather takes it toll in most matches

## County Championship: Gough finishes off defiant tail

**DEREK HODGSON**

reports from Worcester  
Yorkshire 321 & 266-7 dec;  
Worcesters 355-9 dec & 121  
Yorkshire won by 111 runs

A brilliant innings by Michael Bevan on a turning pitch set up Yorkshire for a victory that gives them a 16-point lead over Kent at the head of the Championship, with Kent having a game in hand. Setting Worcestershire 233 in what became 60 overs, they reduced them to 28 for 5 and then had two hours of frustration as the tail resisted while black clouds circled the ground.

The day began and ended in drama. Thinking that Yorkshire would make a measured addition to their overnight lead of 54, a Hereford lad went shopping, but rushed back when he heard three wickets had gone down for two runs in nine balls. Richard Illingworth and Vikram Solanki won immediate turn. Add an unpredictable bounce and the collapse was explicable.

Yorkshire were saved by Bevan, supported in turn by Craig White and Richard Blakey. Bevan's 57 came off 75 balls and included seven fours, his footwork a lesson to his crease-bound partners. Bevan and White added 93 in 24 overs against two spinners, one of whom has Test caps, the other England Under-19 appearances. Bevan's speed and power

## Durham dampener

Durham's gloom deepened when rain at Chester-le-Street yesterday cost them the chance of securing their first County Championship victory of the season and left them at the foot of the table.

Gloucestershire, chasing a target of 395, had not given up hope of victory themselves against the depleted Durham attack when they reached lunch on 113 for 2. Torrential rain prevented a resumption until 4.30 and another shower forced a further 30-minute break before jumps were drawn at 5.30 with Gloucestershire on 150 for 2.

They began the day on 39 for no wicket and lost a wicket to the first ball of the morning, when the Durham-born Nick Truman shuffled across his stumps and was lured by Simon Brown.

The first hint of the frustration to come arrived after just two overs when rain drove the players off. On the restart Tony Wright survived a testing time against Mervyn Betts to reach a 75-ball half-century before be-

## Storm brings respite

**HENRY BLOFELD**

reports from Southend  
Surrey 476-8 dec & 167-2  
Essex 425-9 dec  
Match drawn

With the first innings not yet completed, there was never the slightest chance that a definite result would be achieved on the fourth day. It came as something of a relief for players and spectators alike, therefore, when a fierce thunderstorm broke over Solihull Park in mid-afternoon.

The day had begun with the sort of unfathomable mystery which is so peculiar to cricket. A 142 for 8, still 51 behind Surrey, Essex continued their first innings for two more balls, the second of which, bowled by Darren Julian, Peter Such struck into the hands of short extra cover.

At this point, Paul Prichard declared his hand forced by the fact that the last man, John Childs, was suffering from food poisoning. He was at the ground and would gallantly have batted in an emergency, but this was deemed to be one.

So, by the time Surrey began their second innings, 15 minutes had evaporated and Essex were 51 behind. After bowling five overs against them, at the only all-left-handed opening partnership in county cricket of Darren Bicknell and Mark Butcher, the Essex opening bowlers gave way to spin.

For the next 50 overs, Such, Paul Grayson (orthodox leg break) and Stuart Law (leg breaks and googlies) wheeled away, changing ends from time to time. One never felt the players were doing much more than going through the motions until rain, which had caused three short hold-ups before the decisive thunderstorm, had the final word.

Bicknell flicked Law to narrow Hussain at backward short leg when the score was 62 and Aleister Stewart was caught off bat and pad at silly point off Such at 153. Otherwise, there was the chance to see Butcher play some nice strokes on both sides of the wicket as he continued what is being for him a splendid season, albeit in relatively uncompetitive circumstances. He faced 166 balls hitting one six and 13 fours in his 85 not out.

Only 43 deliveries were possible on the final day of Pakistan's opening first-class match against Glamorgan at Pontypool, with rain depriving the tourists of victory.

DAVID LLEWELLYN

reports from Lord's  
Middlesex 413 & 122-3  
Warwickshire 445-9 dec  
Match drawn

Appalling weather and a marked reluctance by either side to give the other even a glimmer of hope of victory saw events pattering out into a poor draw. Both sides ended up going through the motions, all of them slow.

Phil Tufnell took a catch that

brought laughter from the scattering of spectators as well as guffaws from his team-mates. It accounted for Paul Smith, who had hoisted a delivery from Angus Fraser into the ionosphere over wide midwicket. Out on the ropes, in front of the Tavern Stand, Tufnell toffed his second such haul of the season. He has now taken more Championship wickets (26 at around 28) than either of England's spinners for the third Test.

As he lay triumphant, flat on his back, he raised the hand that holds his cigarettes with the ball safely in it and allowed a broad grin before sharing high-fives with his team-mates. That was the ninth Warwickshire wicket to fall. Ten balls later rain drove them off and they declared 32 ahead on the first innings. Tufnell emerged with honours as he finished with a summer's best of 5 for 71, his second such haul of the season.

He has now taken more

Championship wickets as well as 100 in the second over of their return to the middle. Jason Harrison, struggling for a decent score, stepped back to one that kept low and fell leg before to Gladstone Small's third ball.

Two interruptions for rain later, they had lost a further two wickets. First, Jason Pooley obligingly allowed a delivery from Small to hit his stumps big-time. Then Michael Edmond, on his Championship debut, took his first first-class wicket when he had Paul Willis leg before for 42. That left the Middlesex opener with a pair

of 100s having also scored 42 in the first innings.

Unfortunately, Edmond could not complete his opening over after tweaking his left Achilles tendon. He hobbled off to be replaced in the field by Phil Neale, Warwickshire's director of coaching.

Typically, things became more entertaining with the arrival of Richard Johnson. In what little time that remained he thumped a good-looking 37 in an unbroken partnership of 59 with Mark Ramprakash. Mercifully, more rain then cut proceedings short.

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# SPORT

## Graf delivers the message to Martinas

GUY HODGSON

It was debatable yesterday as to which opponent got short shrift from Steffi Graf. They were both called Martina and both posed questions of the Wimbledon champion that she might have preferred not to answer. Each was dispatched with a dismissive gesture from a blunt object.

Martina II, aka Hingis, was walloped, 6-1, 6-4, to whomly and ruthlessly avenge one of only two blots on Graf's record this year, a defeat at the Italian Open. Martina I (Navratilova) was also thoroughly routed, although it was not a racket that caused the damage this time. The weapon the police were looking for in relation to the grievous bodily harm by Graf was her tongue.

"She's lucky she doesn't have to live with them," Graf said of her injuries after a report in an American paper stated that Navratilova had claimed the six-times champion was faking a wounded knee to provide an excuse in the event of her being beaten. "I think she should know better than to say these things," Graf said.

"We saw each other in the locker-room two days ago and she said she was sorry the way it was put. She didn't really mean how she said it. There's no bad feeling. I don't worry too much about that at all."

Game, set and scratch to Graf, which was pretty much how it was when she appeared on court. She had a grudge to settle - a 6-2, 2-6, 2-6 defeat on the clay of Rome in May - and she began her work against Hingis as if the 15-year-old Swiss girl's behind was within range of her racket.

She always gives her forehands a healthy thump, but yesterday the ball positively sizzled off the strings, scorching into the corners and peppering the lines. If Graf had been serving even half-decently,

### YESTERDAY AT WIMBLEDON

- Henman into last eight with straight sets win over Swede
- Graf puts young Swiss pretender in her place
- Sanchez Vicario recovers from a set down to reach last eight

squeamish supporters would have needed to leave the court. Even with her service game going off half-cocked, she was ahead 5-1 when the players were forced off the court by rain. Five of Hingis's nine points had been from Graf double-faults.

"I was on top of her right from the beginning," Graf said, "because I lost the last match against her and I didn't want to give her a chance of getting into the match. I wanted to go for my shots right from the beginning."

At the receiving end of this onslaught Hingis could only hope the hurricane would blow itself out. "I wasn't nervous," she said. "I had nothing to lose. But at first it was much faster than in other matches. It was so different."

Just when it seemed that the NSPCC would have to be summoned to Centre Court to spare the youngster total humiliation, a higher being took a hand. The rain came down after 17 minutes, and when the players returned, the spite in Graf's strokes had been diminished. Instead of a massacre, we had a match.

Graf was still not serving particularly well, although she dragged her first-serve accuracy rate from a pre-rain 33 per cent up to 50 per cent, and Hingis had a chance to show why she is regarded as a champion in the waiting. She attacked the German's backhand and, as

her confidence grew, there was just the slightest glimmer of an upset.

That came, hovered tantalisingly and went with the sixth game of the second set. Hingis had two break points on the Graf serve but could not find the shot to give her a 4-2 lead.

Graf, reprimed, sensed despondency on the other side of the net and went for the jugular. Ironically, in view of her serving problems, she wrapped the match up with two aces.

"I think it would have been easier for me if she had served more first serves," Hingis said, "because you just have to keep the racket there and the ball flows over the net. She puts more spin on the second serve and I hit almost every return wrong."

Graf could afford to be magnanimous, thinking ahead to the day in the near future when Hingis, 12 years her junior, will be more than just an early-round irritant.

"She's really got a lot of talent out there," she said. "The way she's been trying these last few months, the way she's really improved, there's a very good chance she'll be close to the top five rankings in the near future."

And the Graf knee? "It's fine," she replied. "No problem. I don't think it looked like I had a problem." No one, and certainly neither Hingis nor Navratilova, was arguing.

More reports, results, page 22

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Full stretch: Tim Henman winds up to deliver his serve during his rain-interrupted fourth-round match against Magnus Gustafsson on Centre Court at Wimbledon yesterday. Henman blasted past the Swede in straight sets, 7-6, 6-4, 7-6, to become the first British player to reach the quarter-finals since Roger Taylor in 1973

## Henman's bit of history

NICK DUXBURY

Tim Henman yesterday became the first British men's singles quarter-finalist since Roger Taylor in 1973 when he defeated Swede Magnus Gustafsson 7-6, 6-4, 7-6.

The 21-year-old Henman beat the British weather as rain did its best to interrupt his fourth-round match and disappoint the thousands of fans guming for a home win. The first set was disturbed by showers three times.

Henman made the perfect start, holding his serve to love in the opening game then breaking Gustafsson on his fifth break point to go 2-0 up. He enjoyed a stroke of luck on that point when he clipped the net with a forehand return and the Swede tried a drop volley which failed to clear the net.

Henman went 3-0 up and games went with service until the Briton was 4-2 ahead. But then Gustafsson, 25, places above Henman in the world rankings at No 37, went 40-love up on his rival's serve and, although Henman saved two break points, the Swede hit home a forehand service return to break back for 3-4.

Only two more points were played in the following game before rain halted play after 23 minutes. They came back on court after a 39-minute delay and were about to start again when they had to return to the dressing-room.

Just after the start of the third resumption, Gustafsson served to save the set and forced a tie-break with two convincing passes, but Henman was master once the tie-break began. His first service proved a penetrative winner and he repeated the dose to clinch a 7-2 victory in a set which lasted 43 minutes.

Henman collected the second set 6-4 in 31 minutes after Gustafsson had raced to a 3-0 lead. The Briton broke back in the fifth game with a diving forehand volley which brought the strangely subdued crowd alive.

Henman broke again in the ninth game when Gustafsson put a forehand service return into the net and, when the Swede slipped going for a wide forehand in the next, it gave Henman set point. This time, Gustafsson netted a backhand.

There were two service breaks for each player in the third set, which headed into a tie-break with Henman immediately forging into a 4-0 lead.

Gustafsson reduced the deficit to 4-6 when Henman fluffed an easy backhand volley. However, he made no mistake with his next serve, forcing Gustafsson so wide he could only return into the net for Henman to win the tie-break 7-4 and the match in just under two hours.

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